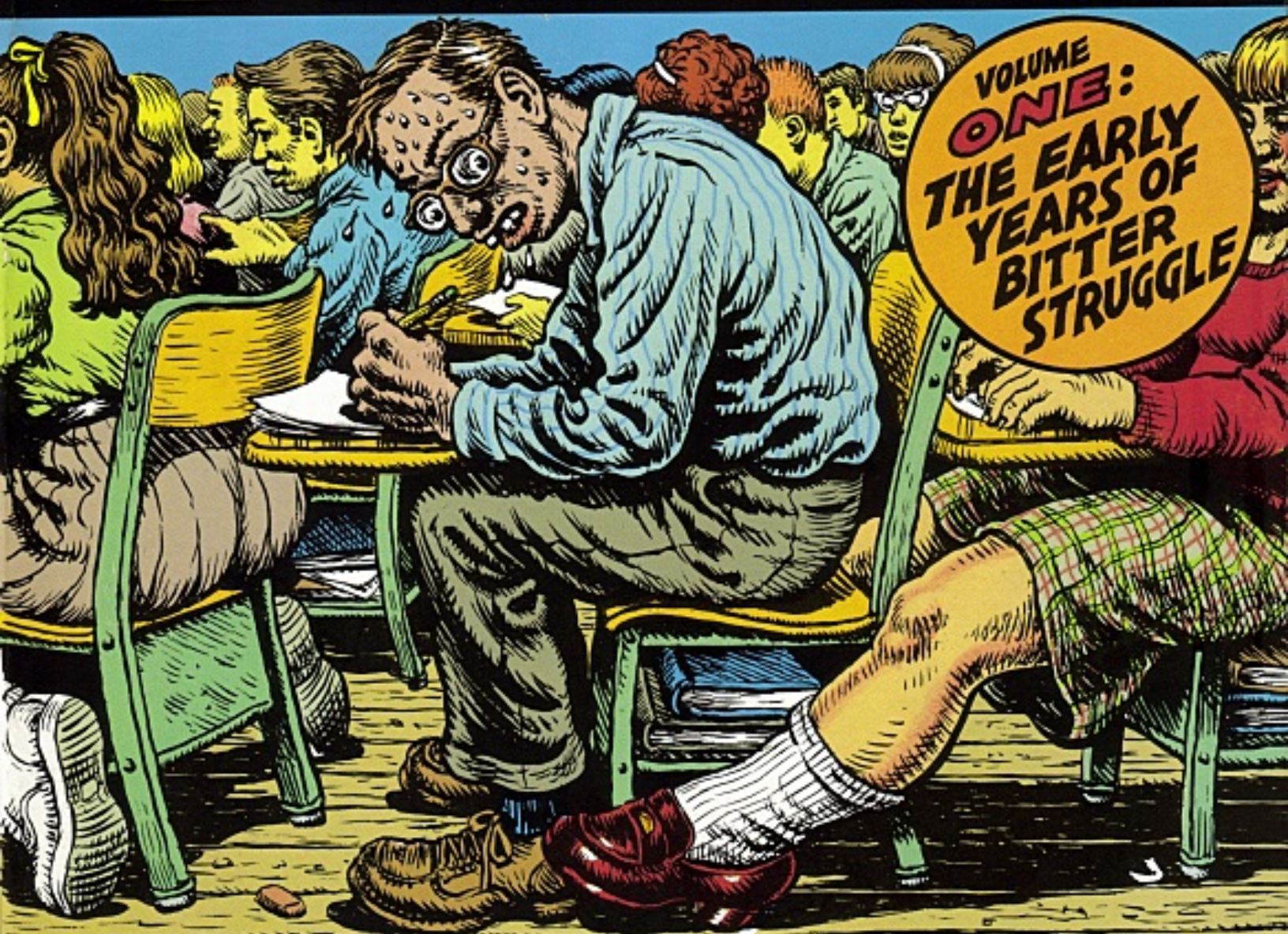


The **COMPLETE** **CRUMB** **COMICS**



VOLUME
ONE:
THE EARLY
YEARS OF
BITTER
STRUGGLE

"... Sometimes I think I'm America's answer to Leonardo da Vinci or Shakespeare. Then, when I'm in a sensible mood, it seems I'll end up doing filler illustrations for pamphlets or third-rate book covers, or sign-painting. Only time will tell... I don't think I've produced anything that has expressed what I feel to the fullest extent yet... Perhaps I never will... It's extremely difficult to express the heart and soul in physical terms. So many things get in the way..."

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Continued on back flap—

**THE
COMPLETE
CRUMB**

THE COMPLETE CRUMB

VOLUME 1

**THE EARLY YEARS
OF BITTER STRUGGLE**

R. CRUMB

Edited by Gary Groth
with Robert Fiore

FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS

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Right Up To The Edge

by Marty Pahl

"...Sometimes I think I'm America's answer to Leonardo da Vinci or Shakespeare. Then, when I'm in a sensible mood, it seems I'll end up doing filler illustrations for pamphlets or third-rate pocket-book covers, or sign-painter. Only time will tell... I don't think I've produced anything that has expressed what I feel to the fullest extent yet... Perhaps I never will... It's extremely difficult to express the heart and soul in physical terms. So many things get in the way..."*

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Charles Sr.'s English and Polish forebears were "dirt farmers... solitary people," according to Crumb, but on his mother Bea's side they were typically urban Irish and very much a part of the

West Philadelphia neighborhood scene. Charles Sr.'s assignments took the family to such places as Ames, Iowa, and Albert Lea, Minnesota, during the 1940s, but they always seemed to come back to Philadelphia, and it was the old brick streets, brownstone buildings, rattling trolley cars, and colorful characters that first impressed Crumb with the richness and flavor of America's vanishing past.

The Crumb kids' play ran to acting out stories rather than sports or athletics. Charles Jr., a natural mimic and actor, emerged as the leader. They collected marbles, cards, spools: "I would draw faces on them and give each spool-man a face and a personality of his own... I had a regular little spool society going for about four or five years... Charles did the same thing with blocks, making it up as we went along... This pastime dominated a large part of my childhood. Then, of course, the comics came along..."

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Robert's first complete comic (1950, age 7) was *Diffy in Shacktown*, using a mouse character and obviously inspired by Carl Barks. He turned out an issue of *Brombo the Panda* every month from 1952 to 1958. For awhile, the other kids had their own books and characters: Carol did *Funny Funnies* with Campfire Clown, Maxon *Dizzy Wizzy* with Jerry the Octopus, Sandra *Black-Eyed Suesan* [sic]. But none of the others had the commitment, or obsession, of Charles and Robert, and their "Animal Town Comics Club" soon lapsed.

There was plenty of inspiration on every



For the Crumb kids, comics meant Walt Disney. Charles in particular was totally steeped in the Disney mythos, and at his instigation they acted out their own Disney-type movies and made their own Disney-type comic books. The model was *Walt Disney's Comics and Stories*, which at that time had a circulation of two million and featured the classic Donald Duck stories of Carl Barks.

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newsstand to encourage two such budding "comic moles." Neither Crumb was interested in super-heroes, whose "Golden Age" was at any rate a thing of the past by the late 1940s. But this was truly the sparkling era for children's comics: besides *Comics and Stories*, and Barks's *Donald Duck* and *Uncle Scrooge* books, animal funnies were cranked out by the millions from virtually every comics publisher.

Charles developed an affinity for *Terry Toons* (Mighty Mouse, Gandy Goose), particularly for the unintentionally bizarre characters of key Terry animator Art

* Unless otherwise noted, all quotes are from Crumb's letters to me, 1959-1962.

Bartsch. Robert's special favorite was Walt Kelly, whose "Pogo Possum" appeared monthly in Dell's *Animal Comics*, as well as in full-length one-shots several times a year, before starting as a newspaper strip in 1949. "I have an annual that came out in 1953 with reprints of Pogo stories in it, and an *Albert and Pogo* comic that came out in 1946. This is one of my best comics... The early issues were the best... Yes, the fact that Okefenokee is a unique little society in itself contributes a great deal to the charm of Pogo, and also the fact that this little society represents the so-called American way of life—such characters as P.T. Bridgeport, the circus man, and Deacon Mushrat are representations of American characters, of an era and its attitudes... This aspect of Pogo holds great appeal to me..."

Crumb's ultimate tribute to Kelly was his most ambitious project yet, *The Hey Diddle Book*. This was a real hardbound, blank-paged book—a convenience he uses for his sketchbooks to this day. He also inked these drawings (using a fountain pen). The format, which alternated comic strips, headings, and incidental sketches, was similar to that of Kelly's Prentice-Hall paperbacks ("Actually, we got the idea from the *Pogo* books.").

Like Kelly, the young Crumb was instinctively attracted to an older, more colorful America, one whose traces were still plentiful in the late 1940s and early 1950s, but which was rapidly being pushed down or buried under by the post-war chrome-and-gasoline Atomic Age. At some point he also discovered the earlier graphic styles: the elaborately detailed backgrounds, studied poses, and innumerable shading lines of the turn-of-the-century humor/political weeklies, such as *Life*, *Judge*, *Puck*. "God, these *Pucks* are beautiful! What I've always looked for in cartoons I found in them... The covers and centerfolds were always colored political cartoons... Some of the covers and center spreads are beautiful... Mostly by Oppen or Keppler... Charles doesn't care much for them. He thinks they are grotesque."

As the brothers' skill increased, their tastes and styles diverged. Charles' hard, confident pencil line was as clear and decisive as anything in ink. Robert's approach was softer, sketchier, more tentative, hesitant. If something didn't come right, he erased and tried over.

Then a new publication and a whole new approach, struck them both with equal force: Harvey Kurtzman's *Mad*

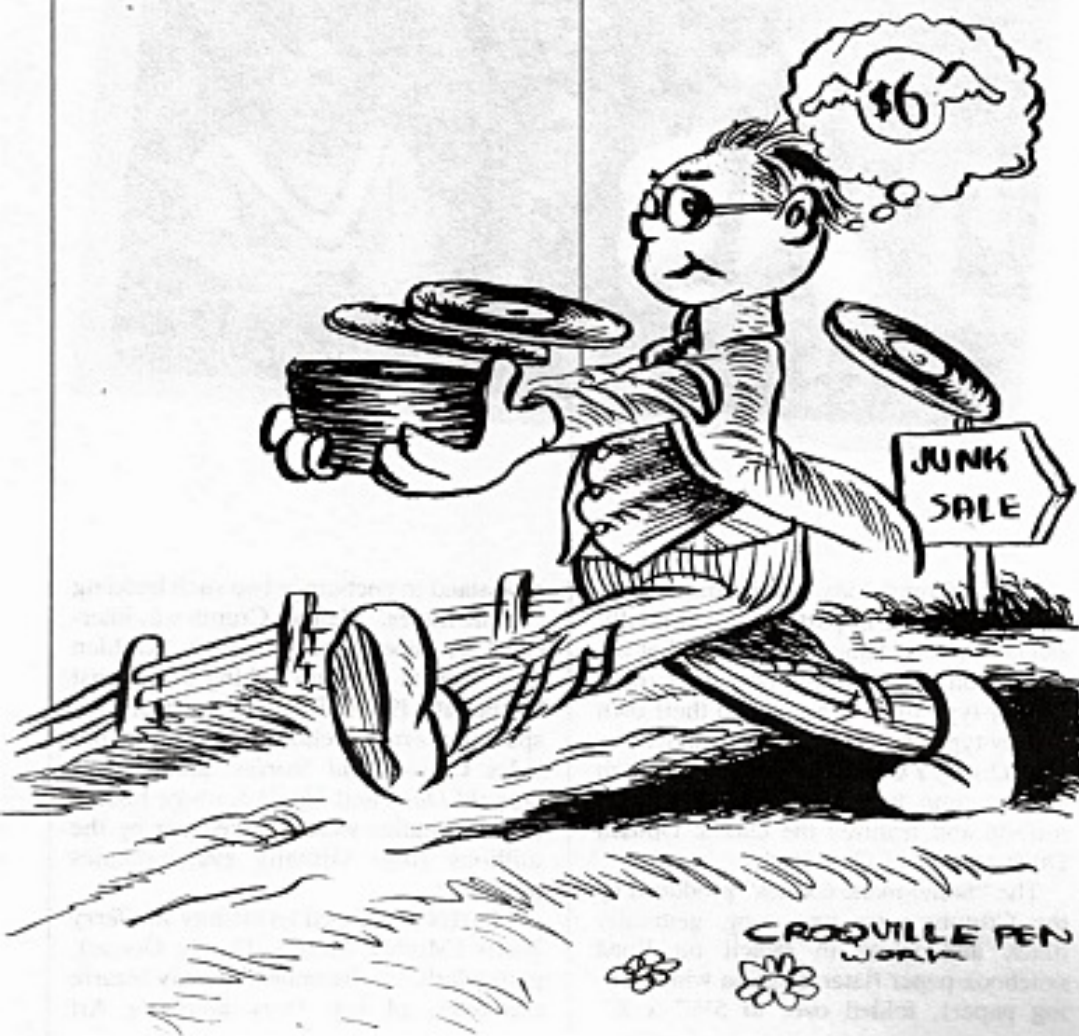
comic book. Like scores of future cartoonists all over America, the Crumbs found something fresh and liberating in the four-color parody of American movies, comics, television, commercials, and folkways, as delineated by artists Bill Elder, Jack Davis, Wally Wood, and John Severin (plus, occasionally, the outrageous Basil Wolverton). Part of it was the superb art, part was the humor—these comics were actually *funny*—but part of it had to be *Mad's* attitude. The Crumb brothers were approaching high-school age with their ingrained isolation, alienation from their family and school surroundings, and fixation on a private world of their own. *Mad's* hilarious put-down of '50s oversell and conformism was something they tuned in on at once.

For the first time, it was not enough simply to draw replications or emulations of Disney, Kelly, or Terry. Starting high school in Milford, Delaware (which Robert described as "just like Kurtzman's Rottenville"), the brothers decided to "go public."

By the late 1950s, Kurtzman and crew had split from Bill Gaines's EC Publications and were publishing a small, comic-book-sized, black-and-white humor magazine called *Humbug*. *Humbug* emphasized the fine-line shading and other old-timey cartooning conventions that Robert loved; with "their own *Humbug*," Robert and Charles expected to sell enough copies within the high school to make a killing (or at least to finance continuing publication on a monthly schedule). Seed money came from the brothers' 1958 summer job doing visual aids at Latex Corporation in Dover, where their father worked. Printing was done on an early-model Xerox at Latex, and the title was a catchword from Bill Holman's "Smoky Stover" comic strip: *Foo*.

Then came the let-down. "Nobody at school would buy them," Robert said. "We sold five copies." So, gathering armloads of their home-cooked satire, the Crumbs headed for the housing tracts around Milford and sold them door-to-door, telling dubious housewives that it was "a school art project." Even at 15 cents each, the sledding was rough.

Unexpected help came when the brothers and comics fandom, such as it was in 1958, discovered each other. Through intensive correspondence and occasional plugs in EC comics or *Humbug*, a few publishers of fanzines or ersatz-Kurtzman amateur satire magazines were discovering each other's existence, and trading or selling minuscule press runs of *The Complete EC Checklist* (Fred von Bernewitz), *Frantic* (Joel Moser), *Ecch* (Ken Winter), *Spoof!* (Doug Brown), and *Fanfare*



(myself). Soon *Foo* was part of this network, and the "egoboo" and admiring letters from other *Mad*- and *Humbly*-addicts (if not the nickels and dimes) encouraged the Crumbs to go on.

Somehow they located a multilith press in a Milford garage and the owner turned out *Foo* #2 and #3, 300 copies of each, at \$32 per (paper free). Reproduction of #1 had been marred when their heavy pencilling buckled the light tracing paper they used, resulting in white "bubbles" in the background. Multilith, plus careful inking, improved the way #2 and #3 came out. But nothing, it seemed, could improve sales at Milford High, and nobody connected with the enterprise had a taste for the door-to-door struggle. So #3 was the final issue of *Foo* (I still have the unpublished covers to #4 and #5). Years later the brothers burned unsold stacks of this now-rare collector's item in disgust.

What's already apparent in "Report from the Brussels World's Fair," Robert's first published story, is a motif that continues in his work to this day: The familiar bespectacled figure of R. Crumb, at the center of the things, speaking out to us from between the panel frames, interacting with characters in the story, explaining and reacting as events develop, and invariably winding up the worse for wear in the last panel. There is, however, more self-conscious "charm" in these earlier stories, both in Crumb's self-depiction and in the Kellyesque "colorful characters" who fill the backgrounds and make up the struggling mass of figures in the mob scenes.

The influence of Nast, Davenport, Frost, Kemble, and the other artists from the early political/humor weeklies is evident, couched in the conventional anti-communism of the time, in the "Clod Award" and "Khrushchev Visits U.S." "My Encounter with Dracula" is a blend of the old-time approach to pen-line shading and Kurtzman's own lessons in staging and storytelling. (Notice how each panel's action and background serves as a frame for the white face of the "I"-character: very sophisticated handling for a 14-year-old.)

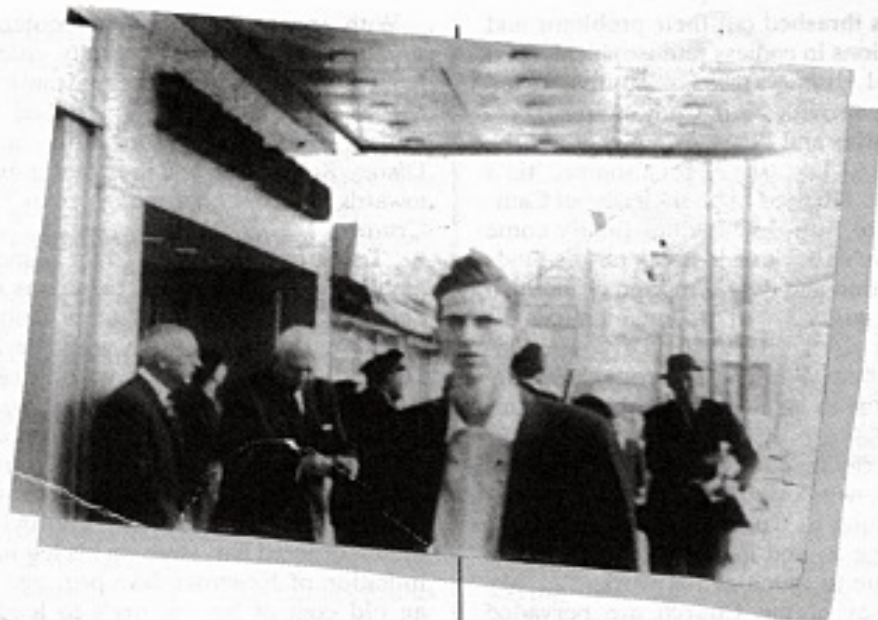
With the failure of *Foo*, the brothers retreated into their self-imposed isolation, remaining in touch with individual comics fans through letters and sporadic contributions to *Frantic*, *Ecch*, *Gamut*, et alia. At the end of the 1950s, the ranks of fandom were few, isolated, and (seemingly) shrinking; nobody foresaw the "Silver Age," the return of super-heroes, or the resurgence of interest in comics to come in the '60s, '70s, and '80s.

With prospects so gloomy for any kind of publicly-published magazine, the broth-

ers began collaborating on private "two-man comics": one-copy, pencilled features, usually drawn into cardboard-backed composition books. Charles and Robert would letter dialogue balloons and draw their own characters; each of these "cues" would be answered by the other, drawing a different character and responding with dialogue that carried the situation on from there, improvising a story line as they went along. *R. Crumb Almanac* and *Arcade* were the umbrella titles for the books; "Treasure Island Days," "Animal Town," and "Chuck and Bob Comics" were among the story features.

General story lines, directions of dialogue, and bits of "business" might be discussed briefly before drawing, and backgrounds would be filled in later by whoever felt particularly ambitious. Sometimes the cross-talk dialogue "cues" stopped for awhile while Robert or Charles would spin out on a more or less "solo" passage involving one or two of their characters. And covers were generally pencilled, inked, and colored by either Robert or Charles. But part of the two-mans' fascination was the element of surprise: one brother spontaneously "topping" the other, pulling a fresh plot twist out of a hat and springing it with dramatic effect: "Your cue, chum!"

There were few other outlets. "The school here has found out I can draw," Robert reported in 1959, "and, like at every other school I've gone to, they've flooded me with stuff they want done. . . Bulletin board stuff, posters, paintings, drawings. . . After this goes on for awhile, they start thinking you're a drawing machine, and can turn out stuff like a printing press turns out newspapers or sumpin'. . . A thankless job, 'tis, but good experience."



High school was a daily agony for Robert: boredom coupled with social and sexual frustration. He had no discipline for or interest in academic studies that the grownups thought were so important, skidding along with a "C" average. And the gap between his four-eyed, skinny, uncoordinated, hypersensitive presence and the typical teen-ager of the American Bandstand era seemed unbridgeable.

"I don't know where the teenagers get the idea that they are rebels. . . I often wonder if many teenagers today stop and look around and ask themselves why [they] are doing certain things, asking what makes them act the way they do. . . Don't they want to be individuals? I don't know how it will affect the future of the country. . ."

Easy to spot just below the surface was intense, barely-concealed sexual need, jealousy, and rage: ". . . the teenage fad is really reaching extremes. . . Songs like 'Teen Angel' (bruther), the magazines going completely sick over Fabian, Frankie Avalon, and the rest of those puppets. . . I have a deep and sincere love for Fabian," says this girl in *Sixteen* magazine. "Would he ever date anyone who was not world-famous and who he never heard of? It's so stupid it's funny."

Thinking about girls only led Crumb into endless cycles of futility. He tried to sublimate his feelings: ". . . I've never gotten close enough to any girl to judge what kind of a relationship I want. Sometimes I think it is better to love them in your heart. It is sweeter, purer that way. Getting involved drags in social obligations, conflicts in personality, and such. I think I am learning to love from a distance and be satisfied with it, in fact, better off without it. . ."

But, really, Robert was fooling no one with this line, least of all himself. He and

Charles thrashed out their problems and frustrations in endless philosophical, even mystical, discussions. This ultimately led to a break with their Catholic past:

"Charles and I have dropped out of the Church...Tsk, tsk... 'Tis a shame, 'tis a shame... We used to be such devout Catholics too! But, the time has finally come when we've decided to break off the binds of tradition and duty. I'm kind of inclined to feel guilty about it, but I realize it's because all my life it's been drummed into me that to fall away from the 'true' Church is to go corrupt and become sinful..."

Not only the guilt, but the whole scented, rose-windowed mystique of Catholicism clung to Crumb even as he sought to escape it, and its aura still clings like a residue to much of his work. "...My memories of the Church are pervaded with the gloom and solemnity of it... I had a kind of fear for all the priests and nuns when I was a kid... They were so pious, so solemn, sometimes almost not human."

"I went to a Catholic school in first grade that was extremely gloomy... It was in Philadelphia... One of those typical old, dark, big-city schools... All the nuns were mean... We had to wear starched white shirts and ties every day... The first grade had its mass down in the basement, with only wooden boards for pews—my knees always killed me after mass... I was always afraid some nun was going to pounce on me and beat me to death."

"Later on, when I started to become aware of all their traditions and ceremonies, I was despressed, but yet fascinated, by the medieval atmosphere about it all... The songs, the great organ music, the old statues, the designs on the robes of the priests, the processions, the incense, the chants at high mass..." Much of the compulsiveness, paranoia, and claustrophobic atmosphere of Crumb's more obsessed work comes straight from this early and traumatic exposure to the Catholic Church.

Religious paranoia wasn't the only brand of paranoia around. The '50s seem to have been some kind of American high-water mark for a certain haunted political desperation; and Crumb, antennae ever-sensitive, picked up on this too!

"Everybody around this town is running around like a chicken with its head cut off predicting the all-out war that seems to be in the near future, and how millions will die and we'd better wake up and the terrible communists and the 'yellow horsemen' are going to kill all the women, old people, and children, and make slaves of the rest, or that civilization will be wiped out..."

With input like this, the content of *Almanac* and *Arcade* gradually changed from the light-hearted animal antics of earlier years to stories that flashed very mixed signals: one foot still in the Disney/Kelly camp and the other pointing towards what we now recognize as "true Crumb."

"Treasure Island Days" is a prime example of the direction the two-mans were heading. Originally, this feature stemmed from Charles' fascination with the 1950 Disney live-action movie version of the Robert Louis Stevenson classic, particularly with Robert Newton's performance as Long John Silver. During the Crumb kids' play-acting sessions in Oceanside, California, Charles would improvise a three-cornered hat, strap up his leg in fair imitation of Newton's fake peg, and don an old coat of his mother's to lead the others along the sand for buried-treasure routines.

The Crumbs began by embellishing on the movie's established characters (particularly on Silver) for their stories. The squire, the doctor, Jim, George Merry gradually became typical products of the brothers' skewed imaginations, with all the digressions, asides, mugging, confusions, chicaneries, and mendacities of their animal creations. Then Robert added a character to the "Treasure Island Days" gang who was 100 percent pure Crumb.

Mabel, sometime prostitute, barmaid at Miss Purity's inn, and little Jim Hawkins' delight and torment, has to take pride of place as the first "R. Crumb girl." As time went on, Robert grew less and less interested in the pirate aspect of the strip and more and more interested in concentrating on Mabel's attributes. The stories became "...Jim and Mabel, modern-day..." The format is now this: Miss Purity is busy in the kitchen... Jim sees the image of his dead mother, who died when Jim was only four or five, in Mabel.

"Jim goes to a Catholic school called St. Christopher's... His main childhood friends are Elizabeth Strong, the daughter of a wealthy businessman, and Jeffery Malcolm, who comes from a lower-middle-class family. Elizabeth is in love with Jim, much to Jim's bewilderment..." So far my comic stories about these characters have been rather ineffective, but, like I say, if I stick at it, I think it will improve." The sketchbook drawings of Mabel are evidence that he did stick at it, and seems to have gotten a lot of pleasure out of the practice. Frequently Charles would pick up the completed *Arcade* and pencil in a further drawing of Jim Hawkins cavorting over, under, or around Mabel's beloved bulk.

About the time the Crumb family

moved to Dover, Delaware, in 1959, another familiar denizen of the R. Crumb constellation makes his first appearance—under another name. "Cat Life" was a "realistic" treatment of the comings and goings of the family's and neighbors' troops of cats; part of its rationale was to entertain (and also tease) Sandra. Robert based the story around Fred, but as the character evolved, began walking upright, and assumed his perennial con-man stance, the name of another cat, Fritz, attached itself to him.

In "Animal Town (March 22 to April 3, 1960)," Fritz is still a long way from being "X-rated and animated," but he's already a match for the bucolic likes of Charles's Fuzzy ("Harry") ("One hundred bucks or th' sheriff!") and frau. Their encounter moves much like a Laurel and Hardy short, with plenty of time for takes, double-takes, and double-cross, and a formidable no-nonsense Missus in the offing.

Midway the story switches to an adventure plot, with Fritz completely hemmed in by Blacky Crow and Charles's other evil characters. The robot army, activated by a button you carry around in your pocket and programmed to tip enemies into small pieces, is a typical Charles touch—particularly when the perpetrator of mayhem winds up the victim through his own brutal stupidity.

"Cat Life," which is all by Robert, also changes in tone halfway through, leaving high-jinks to present a wild and threatening landscape when the sun goes down: "Now's the time when us cats lose our tame, human-trained ways and go into our own cat world, which humans aren't a part of! Snicker!" This same air of starting out innocently on an adventure, falling into a threatening background, and finally running in panic from the uncontrollable forces let loose is a constant in Crumb's later, longer Fritz stories, right up to the famous moment when he's offed with the ice-pick.

Toward the end of the brothers' two-man collaboration on animal comics, inspiration began wearing a bit thin. "Robin Hood" looks like it was conceived hopefully as a grand production number. Fritz as Errol Flynn as Robin Hood suggests endless possibilities for satire, pratfalls, and adventure on many levels. But the story goes nowhere and falls apart after relatively few pages. Note how Charles begins by doing the cues for his characters Fuzzy the Bunny, Blacky Crow, and Nero the Pig, but, by the last page of the story, he has lost interest and given up, leaving Robert to draw Charles's characters and dialogue as well. Robert's name is the only one signed to the splash panel, although this is a true two-man.

"Me and Charles cooperate?" wrote Robert on April 4, 1960. "That's a laugh! We're always having arguments about something in one of the 'two-mans'... (Wotta corny phrase, now that I think of it!) We're always resolving never to make another one, but we always do. They're enjoyable and do us both a lot of good in creating schemes and situations, though now we're getting rather technical about it..."

Shortly afterward, Charles completely lost interest in drawing comics. It's interesting to speculate, based on the Crumb Brothers' two-mans and other surviving artwork, what kind of mark Charles Crumb would have made in cartooning had he been determined to continue.

By the end of 1960, Robert, too, was beginning to find the two-mans and animal stories too constraining in format and subject matter to express his pent-up feelings about what he was seeing and experiencing. "...I think it's impossible to portray reality in a comic strip. I don't think it's ever been done... All the great strips have been either satire or parody... I can think of no really outstanding strip which has dealt with real life... Can you? Feiffer's, I guess, in a symbolic sort of way."

Jules Feiffer's probing situational comic-dramas, with the emphasis away from continuing characters and toward an "everyman/everywoman" approach, had in the 1950s moved from the back pages of New York's *Village Voice* to a syndicated spot in some more sophisticated Sunday newspapers, and a series of paperback reprints (similar to the *Pogo* books) was enjoying a vogue. Crumb's new series of "involved" one-pagers in *Arcade* ("Comic Strip," "Three Little Boys," "The Admirer," "On Movie Mags," "The Art Museum," etc.) seeks to use the directness of the Feiffer Format while making no attempt to reproduce a sophisticated urban flavor.

More than ever before, Crumb is trying to drop distracting if fascinating personal elements (Kellyesque "colorful characters," slapstick, elaborate Fritz-style dialogue, even the masses of line shading) and deal directly with the reader. The theme is almost invariably the sensitive young man against a callous, misunderstanding world. Girls are brainwashed victims of Hollywood and Madison Avenue, guzzling Cokes and wetting their Capri pants over Fabian, not noticing that Mr. Sensitive even exists. Guys are Big Booby Bastards, period.

Crumb quickly saw the limitations of this format as well as its strengths. "...I still intend to keep working with the animal characters... I can express some-

thing with them that is different from what I put into my work about humans... I can put more nonsense, more satire and fantasy into the animals... they're also easier to do than people... With people I try more for realism, which is probably why I'm generally better with animals."

"Jim and Mabel" in particular led to a new subject, one that would eventually become a cornerstone of Crumb's worldwide recognition. "Some of the comics that Charles and I did had sex talk in them... Would you call this stuff of ours pornographic or 'frankly but healthily erotic'?... Such things as Jim and Elizabeth talking about sex, Miss Purity telling Jim about the facts of life, Jim asking Mabel to have sexual intercourse with him... It's part of life, ain't it? I mean people talking about sex... Little kids being curious about it and all..."

"To tell you the truth, I'm rather modest myself... I know it's foolish, but I think it is the result of my parents' attitude toward sex... They always tried to cover up the facts of life from us kids... Whenever anybody said anything about sex, they acted shocked... I learned the facts of life from a kid in school. My mother is no longer that way, but to this day I have never heard my father say one word about sex."

In his loneliness and depression Crumb questioned his own motive for devoting thousands upon thousands of hours to drawing, and found it wanting. "This greatness complex of mine... It is a foolish 'chase after the wind' and I dislike it intensely, and am trying to rid myself of it. It stands in the way of peace and contentment and makes a man a slave... Really, I feel that my work is but a feeble expression of something that in itself is vague and doubtful... I realize that I'm fairly good at drawing, but you see that's only because I've done so much of it, and it seems sometimes that the only reason I have stuck at it so diligently is because I have to sort of get even with society for not accepting me... Subconsciously I want to make myself immortal among men, leave my mark on the earth to compensate for social inadequacy... So I draw."

The world outside the comfortable but narrow confines of the Crumbs' tract house in Dover was both threatening and an object of curiosity. Someday—soon—it would have to be faced, on its own grim terms. The Crumbs discussed endlessly what they would do: "Charles and I have been considering retreating from this complicated and tangled-up world and becoming vagabonds, traveling around the country... Learn about life and learn how to fend for oneself. Get a job in a town



and save enough money to get by on while traveling. Stopping in small towns and staying there for awhile, you'd meet all kinds of people... You could put on a personality, being jovial and friendly..."

But without the smooth line, or talent to land standing, of a Fritz the Cat, the brothers' dream of going "on the road" à la Kerouac or Buddha soon evaporated. "...We're both still for it, but no money, or hardly any... And my mother... She is dead set against us... Then again my father, being what he is, is all for it... My mother would like to keep us at home for the rest of her life—not that I would mind, in fact I would be very willing to do just that—but, for one thing, I want to taste life for my own enrichment... I know of many an artist or writer who gained much from bumming it for awhile... Going 'on the road' might also help me to find myself and get rid of this damn accursed confusion and frustration."

In spite of his doubts and fears, in June of 1959 Crumb had managed to screw up his courage and venture via Greyhound to New York City for a visit with a real, practicing cartoonist: Stan Lynde, whose polished daily-and-Sunday Western strip, "Rick O'Shay," had, like Robert's work, one foot in illustration, one foot in old-timey slapstick.

"It was really interesting, seeing Stan's studio and watching him work... Gosh, he sure takes a lot of time with his work... I watched him ink in a strip... And he goes so very slowly... Taking pains with every detail... It's amazing!... Putting out a comic strip is much more complicated than I thought!... Whew! Stan says he usually works about ten hours a day... He says he sometimes envies the people who just go to work from 9 to 5 every day for 5 days a week."

After my first visit to the Crumbs in Milford in summer 1959, we talked about launching a new magazine, sort of a super-combined *Foo* and *Fanfare*. But, by October 23, Robert was writing, "About the

magazine... It seems Charles has lost enthusiasm and is backing down, which means that he won't be doing any work in it, and won't be putting in any of the cost... Me, not being able to work now 'cuz of school... Looks like we'll have to cancel our plans..."

Besides a handful of fanzine contributions and work for *The Ecolian*, Dover High's school paper, Robert's next attempt to get published was an ill-fated campus humor magazine at my own school, Kent (Ohio) State University. There was much through-the-mail discussion, and Robert sent four or five generic satire pages; these contributions were joined by those of myself and other Kent locals, and then the editor of the never-published *Obese Toad* hopped off for parts unknown. Neither he nor the pages were ever seen on campus again.

"I really wish I could print another mag... Everybody in fandom is all for it... And it is very valuable experience and keeps life from getting too dull and inactive... I know I should be going into all kinds of ambitious adventures and enterprises... I only wish I had the initiative and aggressiveness it takes!... I'm a day-dreamer instead of a doer... 'N' I wish I was both! I'm afraid of hard work and people... That's my trouble!"

Alienated at school, with no friends, and now somewhat distant from Charles, Robert was slipping into a period of drift. He didn't feel in control of his life. Only with a pencil in his left hand and a blank paper in the other could he find a satisfactory reality—one of his own creation.

As the end of his high-school days approached, the thought of finding his own place in the world puzzled and frightened him. "I'm not quite sure about my own future; I'm even a little baffled. There are so many indefinite things... Like the future of the cartoon industry, what the public will like, what I can do best myself... All this makes the future seem rather hazy... Which is best? Comic strips? Magazines? Not comic books, unless there's a great reawakening!... Possibly the animation field... Hmmmm... Yik."

Crumb became increasingly critical of his own work in *Arcade*: "I've got a long way to go yet before I perfect the female face, and figure too... The usual dum drawings of Mabel and Jim throughout the book, and a couple of comic strips about them... The little character with the hair parted in the middle is supposed to be the inner me sorta... With him I portray actual experiences of my own, with emphasis on the lovelorn side of my nature..."

"Yes, I did lose interest in that 'Life and Times of Fritz' thing pretty fast... Actu-

ally it was because I got sort of stuck... It was getting to complicated... In my mind, I mean... It was too difficult to handle... I decided to wait a couple years before trying to put so much into a story... All the plans I had thought of and tried to work out for that story were just more than I can handle right now... Too hard, much too hard to express."

He even began doubting the medium of comics itself: "...Yes, I'm trying to put into my work the everyday human realities... It's an extremely difficult thing to do in the comic strip medium... There are so many delicate little things that, when I try to express them in comic strip form, come out awkward... A lot of things, it seems, can only be gotten across when you write them down, explain them out with words... Charles and I have had a few debates as to whether you can express reality to its fullest in the comic strip... He says it can't be done. I say I'm going to try it... So far, I haven't really gotten at stark reality, the bottom of life (as I see it) in my work... I might end up giving it up and going over to writing alone, if it doesn't seem to be doing any good to try to do it in comic strips. But then, who knows, I might succeed?!"

With Robert's high-school graduation, there were now two Crumb brothers sitting around the house in Dover with, it seemed to C.V. Sr., nothing particular to do and all day to do it in. He began to make threatening noises about "getting jobs or getting out," neither of which either Robert or Charles was prepared to do. Their mother backed them up, and the battle lines were drawn.

"The family situation has gotten pretty bad around here," Robert wrote on April 10, 1962. "I have often been tempted to end my life, but I can't find any means which are quick and painless enough. I'd get out of this miserable, sterile place, but the rest of the world is just as bad. 'There is no happy land.' The whole world is a jungle. You can't get away from it."

"My parents have been at each other's throats constantly for the past month or so... Can you blame me for feeling depressed about life? I don't want a bed of roses, but even so..."

I suggested he visit me and my family in Ohio. We tried desperately to cheer up the strange, morose, solitary teen-ager who drew such incredible things in the little notebooks he always carried with him. Robert and I stayed up all night talking about society, politics, comics, and 1920s jazz and dance bands and records (a mutual passion). We explored the Kent area (including the old record stores) on foot, and even my girlfriend, Barb, who took to Robert right away, joined the cam-

paign to drive off his melancholia.

But nothing worked. When the visit was over and Robert stood under the bus-station canopy, holding a pasteboard trunk filled with 78 records (clothes could be mailed later), his expression was just as woebegone as it had been the day he arrived.

Nor was there any relief back in Delaware. "When they start arguing," he complained, "I just have to get out of the house. In fact, one morning about a week ago, things got so bad that I stuck some clothes in a bag and hitchhiked to Philadelphia. I stayed with my uncle for a few days, which was almost as depressing as being at home... Then my mother found out where I was and came up and dragged me back."

"The whole situation was infinitely depressing. A lot of times I almost broke down in tears thinking about it all... If you haven't got the inner toughness that it takes to survive, you might as well have yourself committed or do away with your life..."

Robert reached his absolute nadir "one day shortly after I came back... from my trip to Ohio. Things were looking terribly bleak and I was more miserable than I'd ever been before in my life. I can't tell you how miserable I was. 'This is unbearable,' I thought to myself. 'I can't go on living with this terrible feeling inside of me.'"

"So I went out walking and came to this swimming pool. Here, I discovered, was an ideal place to commit suicide. The pool was about twelve feet deep and filled with water. Drowning is quick and comparatively painless. I stood by the pool for about half an hour, trying to get up the courage to jump in."

"But deep down I knew I could never do it. I found that even with its misery and frustration, life was precious to me."

"Complete oblivion! The thought of it makes everything in life seem good and dear, even suffering..."

"It's hell to go and see other people of living, and loving, and enjoying life, and not to be able to do it yourself. And all because you're stuck in a place where no one, not a soul, can accept you and make you feel a part of life. Instead, you have to be a recluse."

"I want to live. I want variety, I want to do things and I want to love. You don't know how horrible it is to want these things desperately and to not have them even a little bit."

Crumb drew back from the edge of the swimming pool and went on, struggling through his depression. But it's an experience he never forgot and, in some ways, through his art, he is still standing there, on the edge, staring into that pool.

CURRENT EVENTS DEPT:..AND NOW FOO TAKES YOU TO BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, FOR A REPORT FROM THE WORLD'S FAIR. BY R. CRUMB. WHO WAS SENT TO BELGIUM BY WAY OF A RUBBER INNERTUBE, FOO CAN'T AFFORD ANY EXPENSIVE PLANE OR BOAT TICKETS, ANYWAY, ON WITH IT!...

REPORT FROM THE BRUSSELS WORLD'S FAIR! ⚡⚡⚡

PICKING
IT UP IN
BRUSSELS,
BELGIUM
IS YOUR
NEWS
COMMENT-
ATOR
R. CRUMB!

WELL, HERE WE ARE, FOLKS! DOWNTOWN
BRUSSELS, WAITING FOR THE STREETCAR
THAT WILL TAKE US ON A TOUR OF THE
CITY, THEN ON TO THE FAIR!



WHILE WE'RE WAITING, LET'S
TALK TO SOME
OF THESE PEOPLE!



AS YOU CAN SEE, THERE ARE PEOPLE
FROM ALL PARTS OF THE WORLD
HERE ... AH, SIR, WOULD YOU MIND
TELLING US WHERE... **HEY!**





WELL, ENOUGH FOR INTERVIEWS...
HERE COMES THE STREETCAR THAT
TAKES US TO THE WORLD'S FAIR!



EVERYBODY IS STARTING TO
BOARD THE ST- (JOLT!)... TH-
THERE'S A BIG CROWD HERE,
FOLKS... (MORE LIKE A
MOB!)... AN...



SOME PEOPLE ARE STRUGGLING
TO GET OFF THE STREETCAR...
AS YOU CAN SEE, THINGS ARE
IN QUITE A STATE OF CON-
FUSION!



PEOPLE ARE QUITE ANXIOUS
TO SEE THE FAIR, BUT
THIS SITUATION IS BEYOND
CONTROL!



GOOD LORD! THE PUSHING, CRUSHING MOB HAS WEIGHTED DOWN
ON THE STREETCAR TOO MUCH, IT FELL OVER!









MIGHT AS WELL INTERVIEW THIS
CLOWN! WELL, SIR, HOW'S BUSINESS?

OH, FAIR!

THIS LOCATION AT THE WORLD'S
FAIR IS A PERFECT SETUP, I
SELL THOUSANDS OF HOT-
DOGS A DAY, RIGHT NOW
I COULD RETIRE AND LIVE
LIKE A MILLIONAIRE!

BINKIE'S HOTDOGS
ALL KINDS SEASONING
MUSTARD, RELISH, POTRZEBIE

MUSTARD 1.00
POTRZEBIE .01

BINKIE'S
HOTDOGS
STOCK

THINK

WELL, ALL IN TH' MONEY—ER—
SPIRIT OF THINGS!
NOW LET'S
MOVE ON!

AS WE APPROACH THE ATOMIUM
THERE SEEMS TO BE A MERGING
CROWD IN THE ROAD—

THE CROWD IS
GETTING THICKER NOW,
AND THE SEA OF HUMANITY
IS GETTING IN A FRENZY!

WELL, THERE'S NO MORE ROOM
LEFT FOR THIS STORY
ANYWAY, SO, EVEN IF WE
DIDN'T GET TO SEE THE
FAIR, THIS IS R. CRUMB,
SIGNING OFF, UNTIL NEXT TIME,
LEAVING YOU WITH A LAST
REMINDER, **HELP!**

THE END

HORROR DEPT.: AS THE STAFF OF "FOO" WAS SEARCHING THROUGH AND OLD DESERTED HOUSE THE OTHER DAY, LOOKING FOR OLD MAGAZINES TO COPY IDEAS OUT OF, WE CAME ACROSS AN ANCIENT OLD DIARY, DATED 1885, AND THE OWNER'S NAME WAS O.O.P.S. MORRISON. AS WE READ THE DIARY, WE FOUND OUT THIS BOY REALLY HAD IT ROUGH! SO NOW WE'RE TELLING YOU HIS TROUBLES IN THIS STORY....

MY ENCOUNTER with



THE CASTLE OF
COUNT DRACULA

MY SPIRITS WERE HIGH THAT FATEFUL NIGHT, IT WAS MY NIGHT OFF, AND I HAD BEEN INVITED TO MRS. HOR-TENSE PINCHPENNY'S BALL!

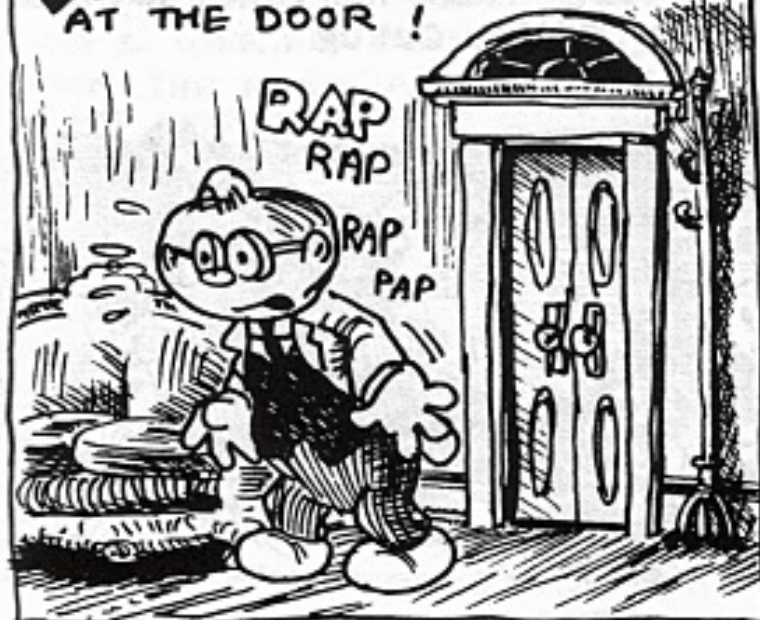
AND NOT ONLY THAT, THERE WAS A CERTAIN GIRL THAT A FRIEND HAD TOLD ME ABOUT, AND I WAS GOING TO MEETHER AT THE BALL.

I INTENDED THAT TO-NIGHT I WOULD LOOK MY VERY BEST!



*FOOTNOTE: MORRISON WAS A BRAIN SURGEON. THE INITIALS O.O.P.S. STAND FOR "ODPS!!"

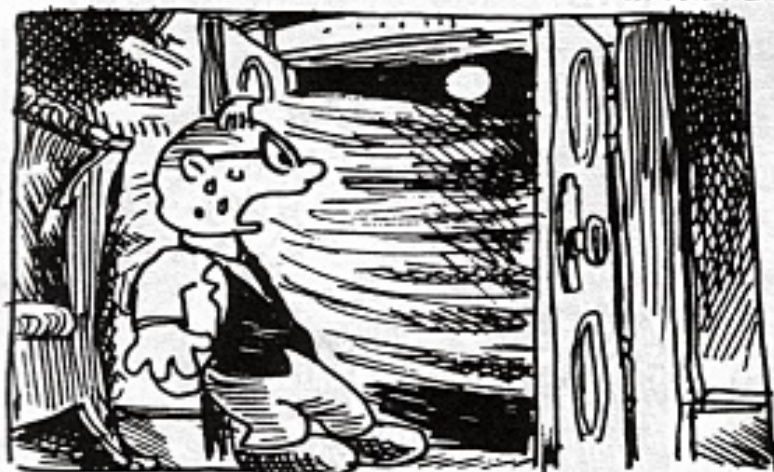
**SUDDENLY... A KNOCK
AT THE DOOR !**



**I WAS FROZEN COLD !
CAUTIOUSLY I APPROACHED
THE DOOR....**



**QUICKLY I SWUNG OPEN THE DOOR,
AND PEERED OUT INTO THE DARK ...
... THERE ... WAS ... NO ONE ... THERE...**



**NO ONE, THAT IS, EXCEPT MY
FRIEND BENTLY FLUD, WHOM
I WAS GOING TO THE BALL WITH.
BENTLY AND I HAD BEEN LONG
TIME CLOSE COMPANIONS.**



**THE COACH HAD ARRIVED TO CARRY
US ROYALLY TO THE BALL, THIS
BALL WAS ONE OF THE EXCLUSIVE
EVENTS OF THE SEASON....**



**ACTUALLY, ME AND BENTLY
WERE LUCKY TO BE INVITED, A
HIGH CLASS FRIEND GOT US THE
INVITATIONS.**



SUDDENLY I WAS FILLED WITH FEAR AND BROKE INTO A PANIC. THE ONLY THING I COULD THINK OF WAS TO HOLLER FOR HELP!



AND TOPPLED OVER INTO A DITCH!

JUST THEN THE COACH ROUNDED A SHARP CURVE



AFTER ALL WAS QUIET, I GOT UP, LOOKED AROUND, AND FOUND MYSELF ALONE, THE HORSE HAD RUN OFF...AND THE DRIVER HAD MYSTERIOUSLY DISAPPEARED.



THEN OUT OF THE STILLNESS A SPINE-TINGLING, HAIR-RAISING, SHRILL SCREAM SOUNDED OUT!



...AND A HUGE, MONSTOR OF A BAT CAME SAILING OUT OF THE MIST!



ONE LOOK AT THIS HORRIBLE BAT
AND I WAS OFF RUNNING BACK
DOWN THE ROAD FASTER THAN
I HAD EVER THOUGHT I COULD RUN.



...AFRAID TO LOOK BACK EVEN ONCE
I COULD FEEL THE MONSTROUS
CREATURE GETTING CLOSER, GAINING
AND GAINING

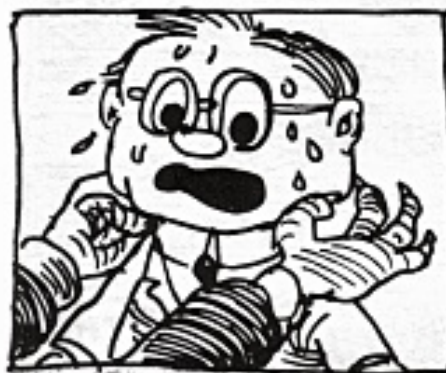


SUDDENLY I FELT TWO COLD, SHARP
CLAWS GRIPPING MY SHOULDERS...
THEY PULLED ME TO A STOP...

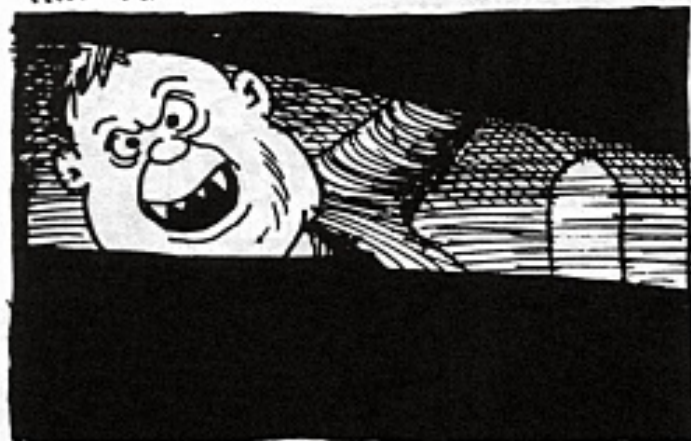
SLOWLY I TURNED AROUND,
EXPECTING ANY MINUTE FOR THE
HUGE BAT TO TAKE A BITE OUT OF
ME... BUT INSTEAD, THERE STOOD...
DRACULA! I KNEW IT WAS HIM
FROM PICTURES I HAD SEEN IN
THE PAPER!



IT ALL CAME BACK TO ME NOW, WHAT I HAD READ ABOUT VAMPIRES,
AND DRACULA... THAT THEY CAN CHANGE INTO THE FORM OF A BAT, AND
THE HUGE BAT THAT WAS FOLLOWING ME WAS DRACULA! I WAS TOTALLY
HORRIFIED, I CONSOLED MYSELF THAT THIS WAS ALL A DREAM,... A HOR-
RIBLE NIGHT MARE, AND I WOULD WAKE UP ANY MINUTE,... BUT NOW
DRACULA CAME CLOSER AND CLOSER THEN



THE NEXT THING I REMEMBERED WAS DRACULA'S FACE. HE WAS LIFTING A LID OR HATCH OF SOME KIND, ... I WAS LYING DOWN AND



I SAW THAT I HAD BEEN LYING IN A LONG BOX ... THE BOTTOM OF THE BOX WAS FILLED WITH EARTH. THEN I SAW THAT IT WAS A ... COFFIN!

SEEMED TO BE IN A CONTAINER OF SOME KIND. I GOT UP QUICKLY BUT I FELT COLD AND EMPTY ... DRACULA GAVE ME HIS HAND ...



I DIDN'T TRY TO ESCAPE DRACULA, MY MIND WAS CONCENTRATED ON ONE THING ... I WAS THIRSTY ... VERY THIRSTY ...



..AND THERE WAS ONLY ONE WAY TO GET THE LIQUID I WANTED.



AFTER MY TRANSFORMATION, I FLEW OFF INTO THE MIST TO HUNT DOWN A VICTIM.



THE
END

THE CLOD AWARD

OF THE MONTH



DEDICATED TO ...
**THOSE WHO THREW ROCKS AT
 VICE PRESIDENT NIXON!**



JUDGE...

Jack Binkley

PRESIDENT - F.C.A.

♦ FUTURE CLODS OF AMERICA

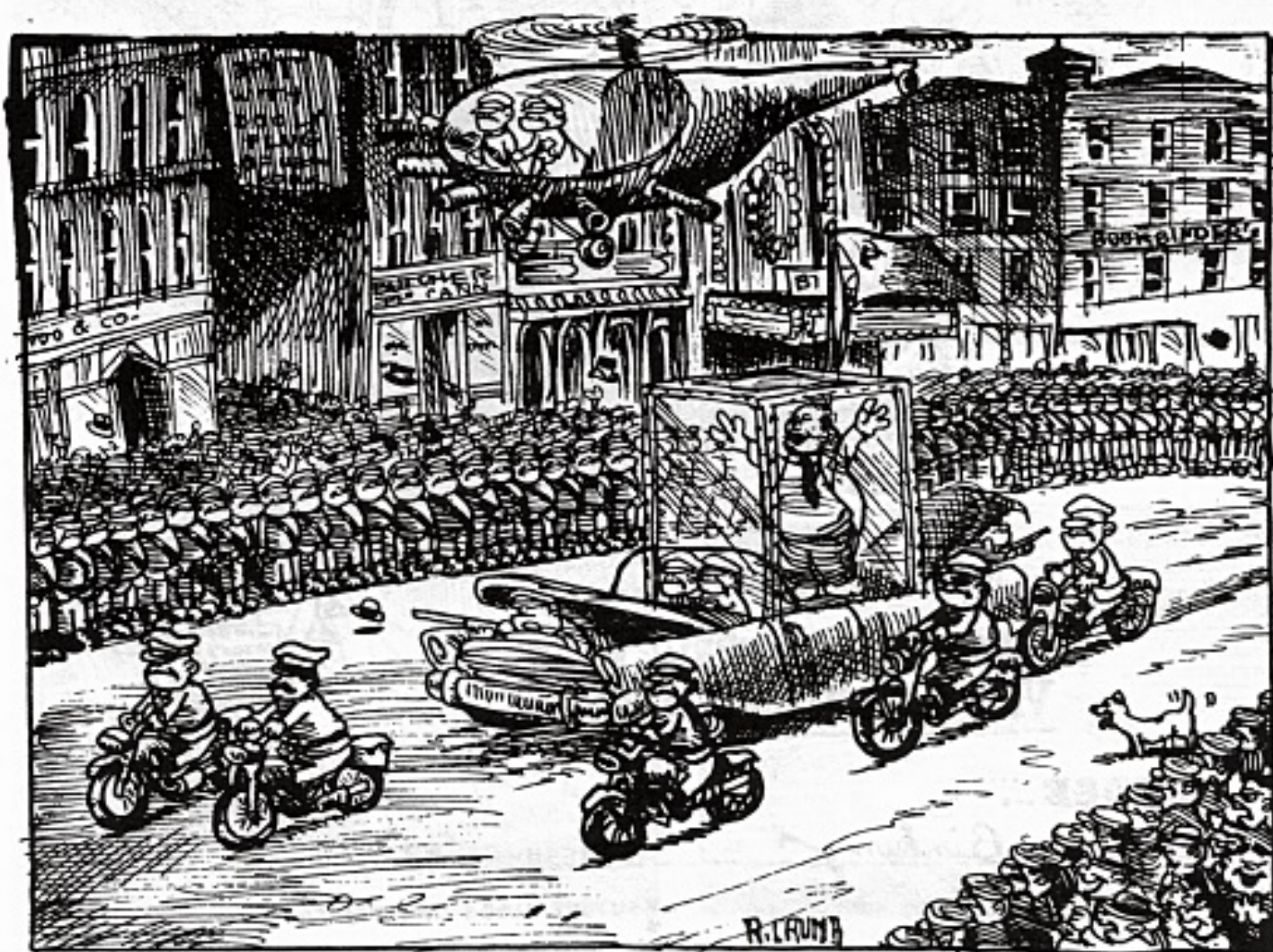
CURRENT EVENTS

KHRUSHCHEV VISITS U.S. !!

YES, IT WON'T BE TOO LONG BEFORE NIKITA KHRUSHCHEV, PREMIER OF RUSSIA, WILL MAKE A VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES. TO ASSURE SAFETY FROM ANY FANATIC WHO WOULD TRY TO ASSASSINATE HIM, THE SOVIET LEADER PLANS TO BRING WITH HIM A HOST OF WELL-TRAINED AND EFFICIENT BODY GUARDS DURING HIS VISIT.

WHILE PARADING DOWN BROAD STREET OF NEW YORK, KHRUSHCHEV'S BODY GUARDS WILL BE POSTED ON EACH SIDE OF THE STREET IN CONSECUTIVE LINES TO PREVENT ANY MOB RAIDS OR LUNATICS FROM APPROACHING THE CAR THAT OCCUPIES THE PARTY BOSS.

KHRUSHCHEV WILL BE SURROUNDED BY A BULLET-PROOF GLASS SHIELD TO ASSURE DOUBLE SAFETY.



KHRUSHCHEV WALKING UP TO HOTEL
SUITE ESCORTED BY BODY GUARDS.



AT DINNERTIME KHRUSHCHEV IS
PROTECTED BY BODY GUARDS



KHRUSHCHEV HAS AFTER-DINNER
SMOKE UNDER WATCHFUL EYE OF BODY-
GUARDS.



EVER WATCHFUL GUARDS STAY WITH
KHRUSHCHEV DURING REFRESHING HOT
BATH.



KHRUSHCHEV AND PRESIDENT EISEN-
HOWER TALKING PEACE - AND
BODY GUARDS



BODY GUARDS KEEP CONSTANT VIGEL-
ANCE OVER KHRUSHCHEV WHILE HE
SLEEPS. ONE GUARD, EXHAUSTED AND
WEARY, FALLS FLAT ON HIS FACE -
GETS FIFTY YEARS HARD LABOR!



R. CRUMB

BE KIND TO ANIMALS DEPT: YES, THIS IS "BE KIND TO ANIMALS" WEEK. YOU GOT THE WRONG IDEA IF YOU THINK WE MEAN CATS, DOGS, BIRDS, COWS, OR THAT SUCH, .. WE MEAN US EDITORS HERE AT **FOO**! BE KIND! BUY OUR MAGAZINE! — AND NOW, TO CELEBRATE THIS WEEK, **FOO** BRINGS YOU JACK WEBB'S NUMBER ONE FLOP...

NOAH'S ARK

PRODUCED BY JACK WEBB
DIRECTED BY JACK WEBB
MAKE-UP BY JACK WEBB
WRITTEN BY JACK WEBB
CASTING BY JACK WEBB
MUSIC BY JACK WEBB

WELL, HERE WE ARE, STARTING THE DAY OFF BRIGHT AND EARLY AT YOUNG DOCTOR NOAH'S CHEERFUL, GAY LITTLE OLD VETENARIAN HOSPITAL!



HMMM! I WONDER WHAT YOUNG DOCTOR NOAH IS DOING IN THAT BACK ROOM. EVER SINCE I CAME TO WORK HERE YOUNG DOC NOAH HAS BEEN SPENDING MOST OF HIS TIME IN THAT BACK ROOM!

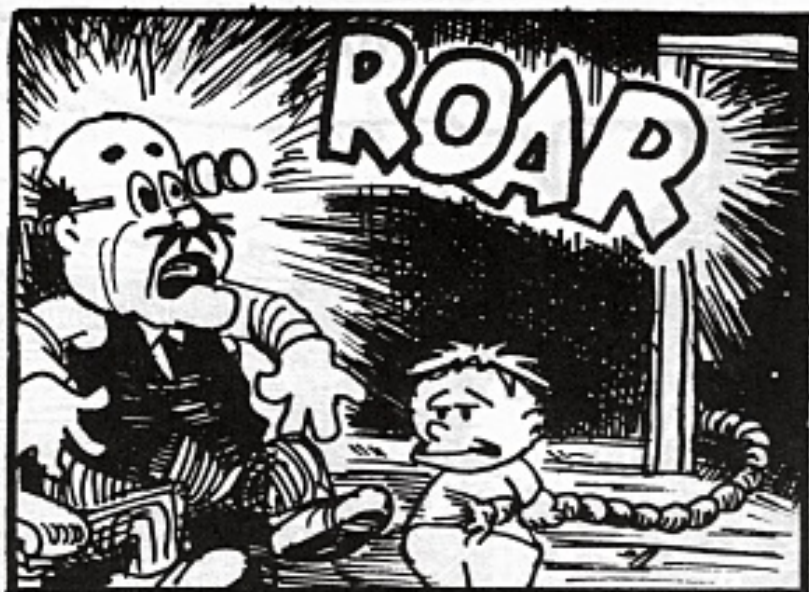
BANG
CRASH
CLATTER

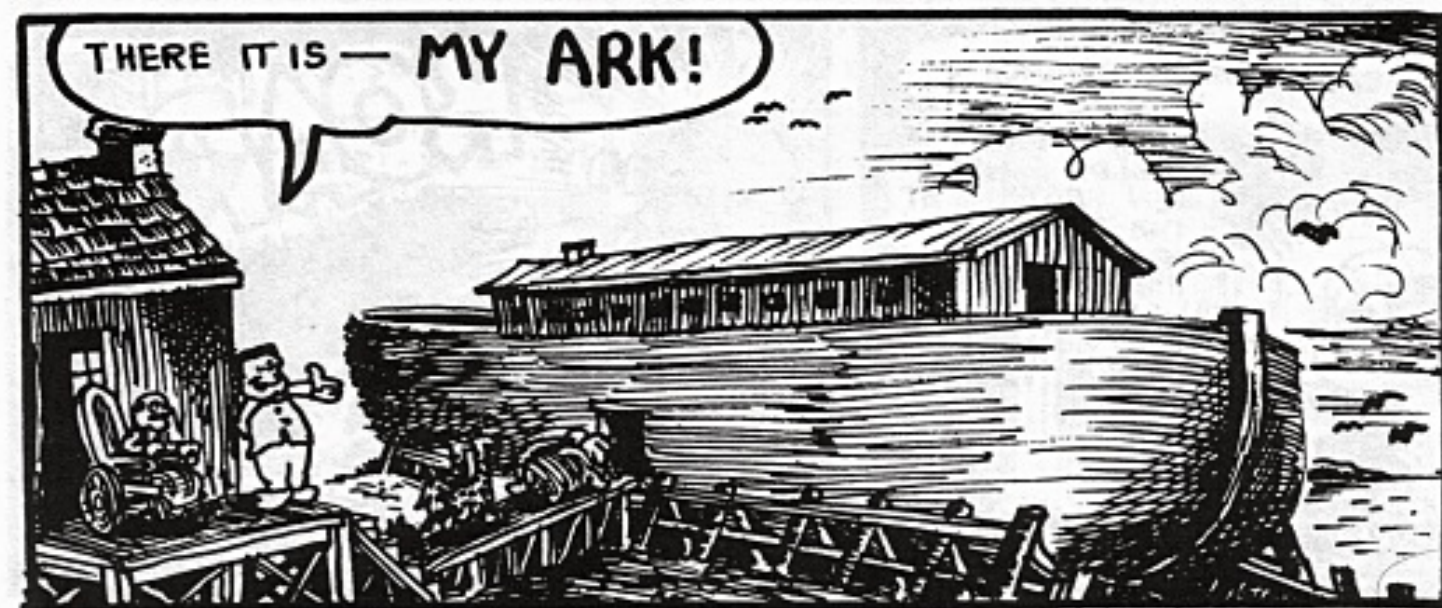
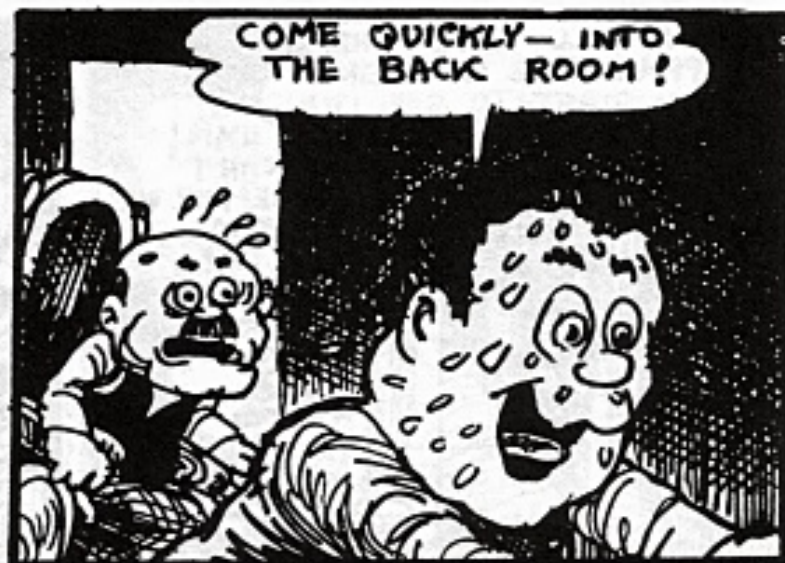
— DOING SOMETHING — I WONDER WHAT HE'S DOING BACK THERE!

BFFETTY
BANG
BLAM
BANG
BANG









Treadsure Island Days

BY
C+R CRUMB

YOUR ULCER BEEN
BATHERING YOU MUCH
THESE DAYS, SQUIRE?

AH YES,
DOCTOR
LIVESAY ... ME
THINKS I NEED
A VACATION.

I HAVE IT! I SHALL TAKE A
JOURNEY BY SHIP TO THE
WEST INDIES! I NEED
TO GET AWAY FROM THE
RUT HERE!

I WOULDN'T ADVISE IT— SOME OF
JOHN SILVER'S SHIPMATE PIRATES
ROOM AROUND IN PARTS OF THE
WEST INDIES—

POPPY
COCK!

AND THEY'VE GOT A FEW OLD
SCORES TO SETTLE WITH YOU ON
ACCOUNT OF HAZING. SO, ACTUALLY, IT
REALLY WOULDN'T BE TOO HEALTHY
TO GO DOWN THERE—

THEN WHAT DO YOU
SUGGEST I DO, DOCTOR, IF
NOT A TRIP TO THE INDIES,
SIR?

SILVER'S
MEN BE
HANGED!

THE SOUTH PACIFIC ISLANDS WOULD BE THE IDEAL SPOT— AH, YES— THE BEAUTIFUL PALM TREE'S THAT SWAY IN THE COOL DELIGHTFUL BREEZES IN RYTHM WITH CHARMING, LOVELY, DANCING HULA GOILS—



YES, MY DEAR SQUIRE, THINK OF IT— YOUR ULCER WILL DISSOLVE LIKE SOFT BUTTER IN THE WARM SOUTH PACIFIC SUN—

DOCTOR— I'M SHOCKED!



BUT WHAT ARE WAITING FOR!

DOWN BOY— DOWN—



YES— BEING AS I AM YOUR PERSONAL PHYSICIAN AND YOUR HEALTH MUST BE SAFEGUARDED CONSTANTLY IT IS INEVITABLE THAT I GO ALONG—



YES YES

I TAKE IT FOR GRANTED YOU ARE PAYING ALL TRAVELING EXPENSES, SQUIRE—



NOW JUST A MINUTE, LIVESAY...

YOU'VE GOT A PROSPEROUS BUSINESS... YOU CAN WELL PAY YOUR OWN PASSAGE!

IT'S YOUR HEALTH THAT'S BEING PROTECTED— NOT MINE!



IF YOU DON'T PAY MY
PASSAGE I REFUSE TO GO, AND
IF I DON'T GO WHO'S GONNA
TAKE CARE OF YOU AND YOUR
COMPANY IF ONE SHOULD GET
SICK — WHO KNOWS, AN
EPIDEMIC WOULD SPREAD —

A PLAGUE WOULD OVERCOME YOU
AND YOU'D ALL (EVER ONE)
DIE LIKE DOGS ON THE SANDY
SHORES OF AN UNKNOWN ISLAND IN
THE SOUTH PACIFIC —

WITH NO ONE TO
BURY YOU, THINK OF
HOW UNSANITARY
THAT WOULD BE —

DOCTOR,
PLEASE!

VERY WELL, I'LL PAY YOUR
WAY, CONFOUND YOU SIR....
I'LL MAKE PLANS TO PUT
ABOARD A FRIGATE AT BRIS-
TOL!

I WOULDN'T
SUGGEST
ASKING ANY
OTHER DOCTORS
BECAUSE ALL
DOCTORS IN
THIS AREA
BELONG TO
THE SAME
UNION AS
I DO —

A FEW DAYS LATER

WELL, LONG
JOHN, SQUIRE
IS TAKING ME WITH HIM
WHEN HIS SHIP SAILS FOR
THE SOUTH PACIFIC!

NOW, WHAT DO YE SUPPOSE
OL' SQUIRE BE GOING TO THE
SOUTH PACIFIC ISLANDS FER, JIM?
TO DIG UP SOME BURIED GOLD
N' JEWELS PERHAPS, EY?

FER HIS
HEALTH, HE
SAYS, SIR!

FER 'IS 'EALTH
'E SAYS, HAW HAW....
WOT A LAUGH, EH
JOHN?

HO, HO,
HO, HO,

THAT'S
RICH —

SOMETHIN' TELLS OL' UNCLE JOHN
THAT YE SQUIRE GOT 'IS
CLUTCHES ON YE MAP OF
YE BURIED TREASURE -
BUT OL' SQUIRE, -E
DON'T WANT TER
LET ON -

HEE
HEE!

- MAINLY, CAUSE HE'S AFRAID
THAT A BUNCH O' NASTY
OL' PIRATES LIKE US
WILL WANTER BEAT 'EM
TO TH' DOUBLOONS -

EEH, HAAA
HAAA -

BUT SQUIRE MISJUDGES 'IS OL' SHIPMATE,
JOHN. OL' JOHN DON'T WANT ANY DIATY
OL' TREASURE - MONEY MEANS NOTHIN'
T' OL' JOHN, IT'S WHATS 'ERE THAT
COUNTS -

'YOU SWABS SIT TIGHT
HERE - IF WERE NOT ON THAT
SHIP HEADIN' FOR SOUTH PACIFIC,
I'LL GIVE UP ANOTHER SET
O' TOES, HEH, HEH, HEH -

WHERE ARE YOU GOING,
LONG JOHN?

I'M GONNA
'AVE A LITTLE
TALKIN' WITH
SQUIRE -

TOP O' THE MORN'IN
SQUIRE - HOW'S YOUR
HEALTH, HEH, HEH,

GOOD
MORNING
SILVER!

OW! H!
LITTLE
SWAB!

I SUPPOSE JIM TOLD YOU ABOUT OUR SMALL JOURNEY TO THE SOUTH PACIFIC... AND I ALSO PRESUME YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A JOB AS SHIP'S COOK! EH, SILVER?

YAH!

YOU 'IT TH' NAIL RIGHT ON TH' 'EAD SQUIRE, HEH, HEH.

YES, OF COURSE!

I'VE ALSO GOT SOME FINE SEA HANDS FOR YE! THERE NOT VERY PERTY LOOKIN' (SPECIALTY GEORGE MERRY—'E'S AN UGLY ONE) BUT THEY KNOWS THE SEA—

POPPYCOCK! I KNEW YOUR MOTLEY CREW—NO GOOD RASCALS!

AND BESIDES SILVER—I'VE GONE AND HIRED A SHIP'S COOK ALREADY! MEET HANS, OUR COOK!

EH?

SQUIRE, 'OW COULD YE DO THIS TO ME—IT BREAKS OL' JOHN'S HEART TO SEE AN OLD SHIPMATE TURN 'EM OUT—

I NEVER THOUGHT I'D SEE TH' DAY, AR—IT RENDS TH' VERY CORE O' ME 'EART T' THINK THAT SQUIRE MISTRAUSTS 'IS OL' SHIPMATE—

BLUBBER!

I CAN'T BEAR TO SEE
THIS POOR OLD CRIPPLE
GET TURNED AWAY INTO
THE COLD!

WE CAN HAVE MY JOB AS
COOK — HE'S JUST A CRIPPLE —
A HELPLESS OLD STARVING
CRIPPLE ... GOODBYE, SQUIRE!

BUT HANS — HE'S
NOTHING BUT A
LOWDOWN —

VERY WELL, SILVER ... IT LOOKS
LIKE I HAVE NO CHOICE
NOW ... ALL HANDS ABOARD
THE "KING HENRY" BY SUNDOWN ...
BUT MIND YOU, NO TRICKERY!

SO BE
IT —

YOU CAN WAGER OL' JOHN
WILL DO 'IS DUTY AS AN
HONEST SEAMAN. HEH, HEH —

POPPYCOCK!

SUNDOWN

WELL CAPTAIN, ALL SHIP-
SHAPE AND SEA WORTHY,
I HOPE!

GENTLEMEN, PERHAP WE'D
BETTER SPEAK IN THE
PRIVACY OF MY QUARTERS!







HEE, HAW, HAW, HAW,
HAW! TAKE IT EASY, JIM,
MATEY, IT'S ONLY A STUFFED
PARROT-

LEFT ME REAL L
PARROT ASHORE, COULDN'T
COME ON ACCOUNT 'E HAD
CHICKEN POX-

YUM!

THESE 'ERE BISCUITS ARE HARD AS
LEAD- MUSTA BEEN SOMETHIN'
I PUT IN TH' RECIPE-

YOU SAID IT!

I'M HUNGRY! -AAAAR!

CRACK
CRACK

KLUNK
KLUNK

CRUNCH

PHOOEY - - I'LL GO GET A
APPLE OUT O' TH' BARREL!

GAULEY

OOF- CAN'T REACH 'EM!

OOPS -

THUD

JACKIE
COOPER
WAS
HERE
1934

BABY
BRISCOLD
WAS
HERE
1950

CUT ALL THIER
THROATS, I
SAY!

YOU'LL DO NOTHING O' TH' KIND
TILL OL' JOHN GIVES TH' SAY-SO

I SAY WE TAKE OVER THIS
SHIP NOW, JOHN! I'M
TIRED O' WAITIN! WE

GOTTA
GET THE
TREASURE
MAP!

GEORGE, PUT THAT KNIFE DOWN,
AFORES I PUT YE' DOWN-.....
ON THE FLOOR-

I'VE STOOD HAZING FROM
YOU LONG ENOUGH, JOHN SILVER,
FROM NOW ON, I'M TH' LEADER
O' THIS 'ERE CREW!

SO BE IT, GEORGE, IF THAT
BE THE WAY YOU WANT IT-
BUT IT BUST ME 'EART WIDE
OPEN T' SEE ME OWN CREW
TURN AGIN' ME-

ALL TH' WONDERFUL TIMES WE
'AD TOGETHER - ALL THOSE SWEET
MEMORIES OF KILLIN' N' STEALIN'
THAT I CHERISH - THAT REMAIN IN ME
'EART FOREVER.

BUT, REGARDLESS, I LOVE
ALL MY OL' SHIPMATES,
AS CAP'N I'VE ALWAYS
DONE WHAT I THOUGHT
BE BEST (SOB)
FOR 'EM.

SNIFF

NOW THEN ... AS NEW CAP'N
I'M GONNA MAKE A FEW CHAN-
GES HERE AND NOW!

NO,
GEORGE!

IS REAL 'ERE BE
FIRST MATE FROM
NOW ON!

NO
GEORGE!

I'VE CHANGED MY MIND - I'VE
DECIDED T' REMAIN CAP'N HERE -

I DON'T THINK YOU
CARE TO ARGUE WITH
THIS BLADE "CAP'N"
MERRY.

SHER THING CAP'N
JOHN... HEH HEH!

HMMMM





MEANWHILST



FOR ALL WE KNOW, THIS BRAT
COULD BE LY'IN - YOU KNOW HOW
LITTLE KIDS ARE - THEY
DEBBRITLY MAKE UP SOME LIE TO
STIR UP EXCITMENT.

HIC

LAND HO!

NOW, BEAT IT
KID, BEFORE I
PUT A HAIRBRUSH
TO Y'

YES, SQUIRE, THERE SHE IS -
YOUR BEAUTIFUL SOUTH
PACIFIC ISLAND -

LOOK AT ALL THE NATIVES LINED UP
ALONG THE SHORE - THEY'VE COME
TO GREET US -

I FEAR THE NATIVES HAVE AN
AGGRESSIVE ATTITUDE -

YOU DO, DO YOU?

RED
COATS,
GO HOME

THUD!

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO
NOW... THE NATIVES ARE HOSTILE
AND THEY WON'T LET US COME
ASHORE!

IT'S NOT SO MUCH A QUESTION OF
ME GETTING MY HEALTH BACK
BY GOING ON THE ISLAND... BUT
THE FACT THAT WE'RE NEARLY OUT
OF PROVISIONS AND WE'LL ALL
DIE AT SEA IF WE DON'T PICK
UP SUPPLIES HERE!

I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT. I ALWAYS
THOUGHT THE NATIVES ON THESE
SOUTH PACIFIC ISLANDS WERE
FRIENDLY.

I'D BETTER
TAKE A LOOK AT
THIS NOTE!

RED
COAT,
GO
HOME

THERE'S SOME WRITING ON THE BACK - IT
SAYS: REDCOATS, GO HOME, BUT BEFORE
YOU DO WHY NOT STOP IN OUR
ISLAND SOUVENIR SHOPS, WE HAVE A
FINE SELECTION OF GIFTS AND
MEMENTOS TO HELP MAKE YOUR VISIT
A MEMORIAL ONE -

HA, WHAT A SNEAKY
WAY TO ADVERTISE -

...BURNS
ME UP!

RED
COATS,
GO
HOME

WELL... I'LL TELL THE
CAPTAIN TO MAKE READY
A LONGBOAT TO GO ASHORE!

CAPTAIN, WE'RE READY
TO GO ASHORE NOW!

GO ASHORE
IF YOU
LIKE—

AS FOR ME, I'M GOING TO TAKE
A DIP IN THE COOL TROPICAL
WATERS—

DON'T I LOOK
CUTE IN A
BATHING SUIT—

(REPULSIVE)

GANG AWAY—

WHEE—

SPLASH!

WELL, WHADDAYA KNOW
ISLAND GIRLS -



WELL DOCTOR... WE'LL PROCEED
TO GO ASHORE WITHOUT THE
CAPTAIN!

YOU TALKIN'
TO ME
SQUIRE -



TELL SILVER TO HAVE DINNER READY SOON -
SWIMMING WORKS UP A BIG APPETITE -



THE WHOLE BLOOMIN' CREW IS
GOING SWIMMING, AND ME WITHOUT
A BATHING SUIT!



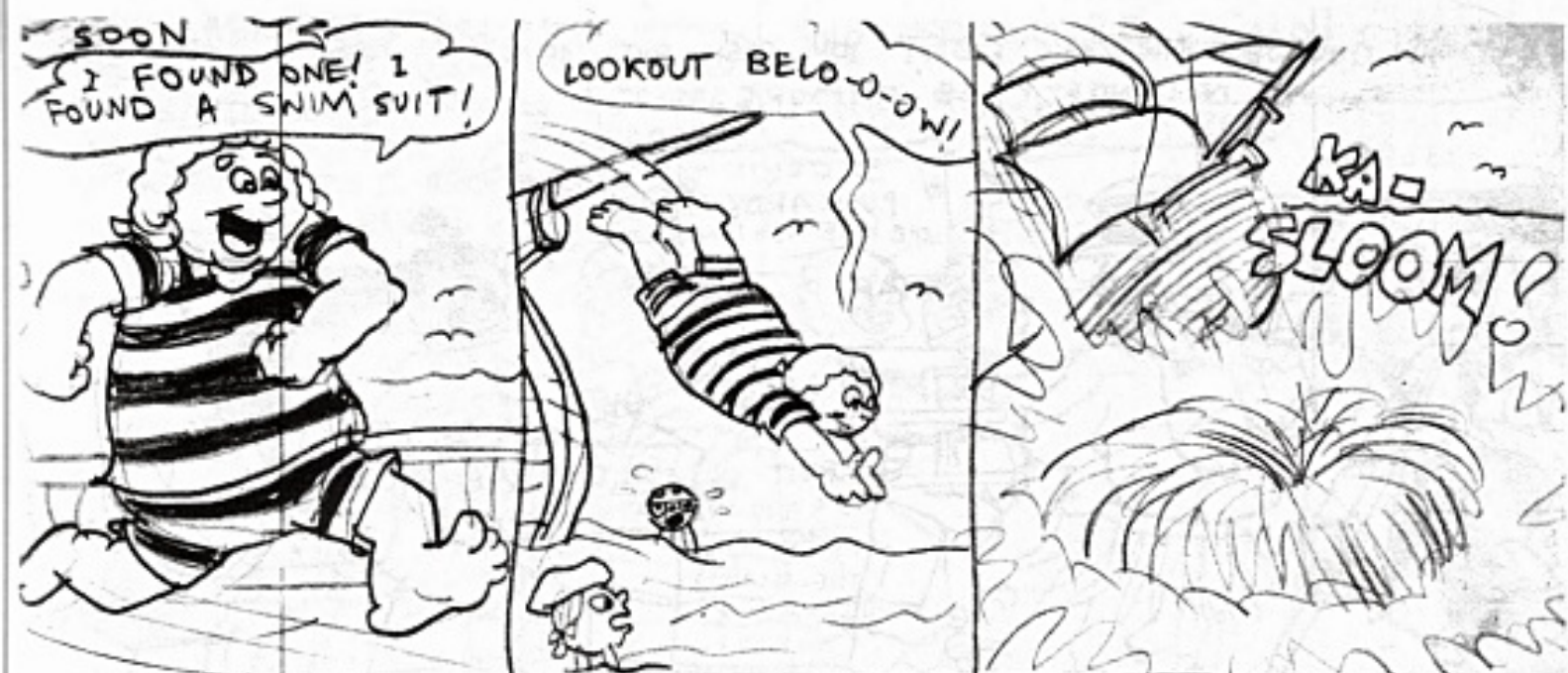
SILVER... DOCTOR SAYS
HAVE DINNER READY SOON...

BLAST THE
DOCTOR - I'M GOING
ASHORE -

AND IF THE DOCTOR GETS TOO
HUNGRY TELL 'EM WE GOT
SOME DELICIOUS BISCUITS LEFT
OVER IN THE GALLEY, AH, AH

HAW,
HAW!







AM, HERE WE ARE... IN 1547 A SHIP CAME HERE AND A SMALL BOAT CAME TO THE SHORE FROM IT. THE MEN WERE CARRYING A HEAVY CHEST AND BURIED IT IN THE SAND BESIDE THE GIANT ROCK!



THE TREASURE, JOHN, TH' TREASURE!

BELAY, GEORGE— CALM YOURSELF—



WHERE BE THE GIANT ROCK?

THERE, ON THE BEACH!



LET'S DIG IT UP! SLURP DROOL

ZIP



NO, GEORGE!

I FOUND IT, THE CHEST... ALL MINE!



NOW FOR THOSE DUBLOONS IN CROWN JEWELS.. HAH HAH



DIG
DIG
DIG
DIG





Cat Life

BY
R. CRUMB

© 55 OCT '59 TO FEB '60



A CAT'S GOTTA EAT! THEM HUMANS THINKS IT'S TERRIBLE!

AS IF A MEASLY BIRD MEANT ANYTHING COMPARED TO MY STOMACH!



GOTTA PAD UP ON 'I'M QUIETLY... EVER SO QUIETLY!

OH NUTS! HE FLEW OFF!





OBOY! NO OTHER CATS IN
SIGHT! THAT MEANS I GET
ALL THIS FOOD FOR
MYSELF!



OH NO! HERE COMES FRITZ,
TH' PESKY LITTLE MDOCHER!



HISSSSS



PHOOEY! HE GOTTA HOG IT ALL!



UH OH! NOW YIMMY'S SEEN
TH' FOOD! WAS
BAD ENOUGH WITH
FRITZ, BUT NOW...

HEY! HERE COMES CHOTTA!



HERE COMES THE WHOLE
CNOTTA FAMILY! AND
TH' SIAMESE KITS, 'N' INKY, 'N'
PAPPY 'N' CHOK!



MEEEEOW!



A CAT'S GOTTA EAT!



HUH?



WHATTA BUNCHA HOGS! AM I
GOT WAS HALF OF IT!



HEY FRAD! C'MERE



IT'S ONE OF TH' BRATTY HUMANS EVERY CAT FOR HIMSELF!

YOW



"YIMMY'S BEEN CAUGHT... I PITY HIM! BUT, ANYWAYS, I'LL GET AWAY BEFORE THEY GIT THERE HANDS ON ME!"

HA!



SOON AS I DUCK AROUND THIS CORNER I'LL BE SAFE! PURRRR!



HA!

YOW!! AMBUSHED!



NOW I'M IN FOR A COUPLE HOURS OF SHEER MISERY!

FRED GOOD!



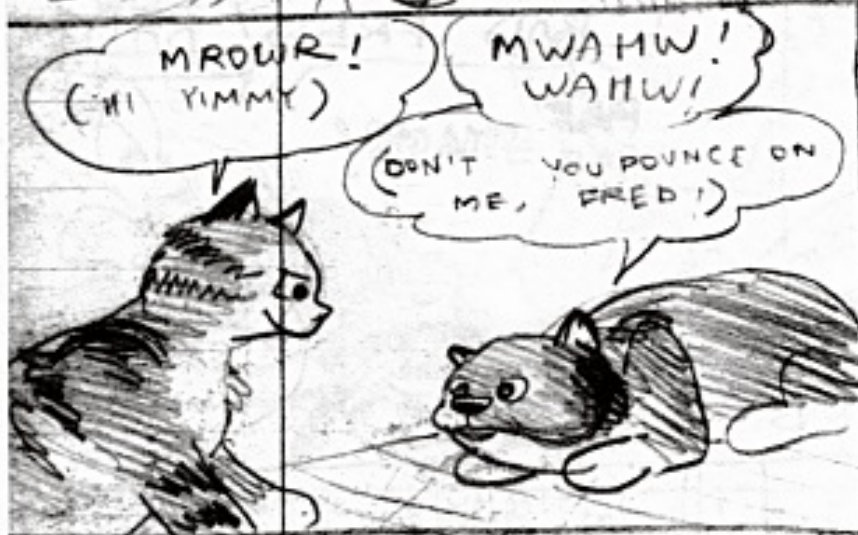
LET'S GO FRED, UP STAIRS, FRED! WHATSA MATTER WIT YOU FRED?

IF I COULD TALK I'D TELL YA... HOO, WOULD I TELL YA!









GROWRRROWR!
GRRR

?



NO! NOT AGAIN, PLEASE
FRED!

GROWL AT ME,
WILL YA!



YOW!



YOW!



HEY!

C'MON OUT AN' FIGHT
LIKE A CAT,...YOU
MOUSE-FACE!

YAAAH... YOU
IS JUST MAD!



MUH... I HEAR
SOMEBODY IN THE
HALL... MAYBE SOMEONE
IS COMING TO RESCUE
US!









LET'S GO MEN! FRED 'N' INKY... SINCE YOU TWO IS TH' YOUNGEST... YOU GUARD THE REAR!

SURE, PAPPY!

WHAT DO WE GET OUTA THIS IF WE WIN TH' FIGHT, INKY?

WE TAKE OVER THEIR NEIGHBORHOOD 'N' GET ALL TH' CHOICE GARBAGE PICKIN'S!

YEAH? WELL... THAT'S WORTH FIGHTIN' FOR, I GUESS!

THERE'S JIANTOWN OVER THE HILL!

WATCH OUT, CATS. THEY PROBBLE HIDING BEHIND A FENCE OR SOMETHIN'... WAITIN' TO ATTACK!

THEY'RE TOUGH BUT FEW!

YEAH, ONLY 'BOUT FOUR OR FIVE 'EM!

YOU SEEM TO BE LOSING YOUR NERVE, FRED! WHAT ABOUT IT??

WHO, ME? ME? I'M BRAVE AS ANYBODY! OBSERVE HOW FEARLESSLY I GUARD THE REAR!

WHEN THEY'RE OUT OF SIGHT
I'LL TURN 'N' HIGHTAIL IT BACK
TO WALNUT STREET IN OUR NEIGH-
BORHOOD, WHERE IT'S SAFE!

GUARD TH' REAR!
HA... YOU'RE JUST
PLAIN CHICKEN!

GOOD! THEY TURNED A
CORNER! I'M NOT EXACTLY
IN TH' MOOD FOR FIGHTIN'!...
IMAGINE THAT INKY CAULIN' ME
CHICKEN... I'D LIKE TO CLAW
HIM ONE FOR THAT!

THE GARBAGE IS BETTER IN
OUR NEIGHBORHOOD ANYWAYS!

HEY, MEN! FRED'S GONE...
HE TOOK OFF!

HUH? WELL, IF
HE AIN'T MADE
OF STERNER STUFF
THAN THAT, WE DON'T
WANT HIM!

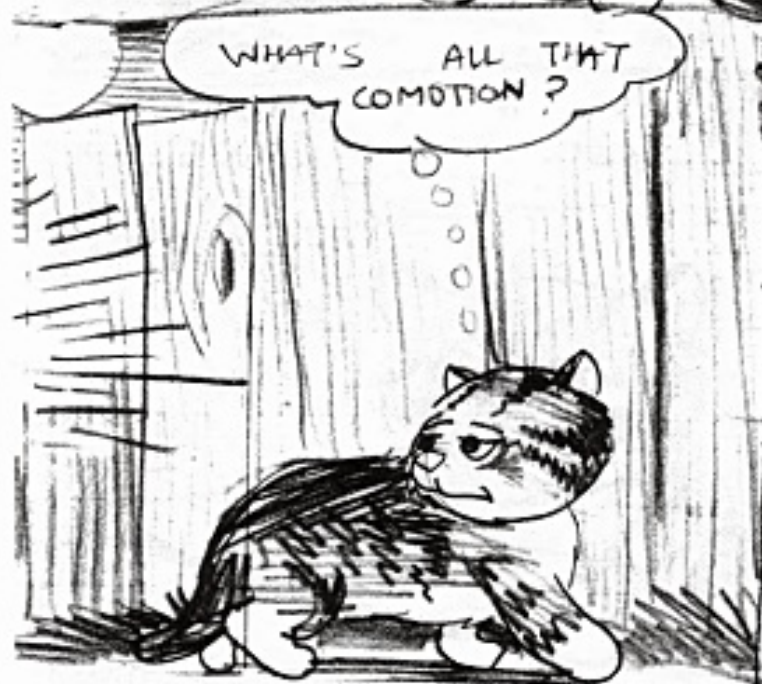
YEAH!

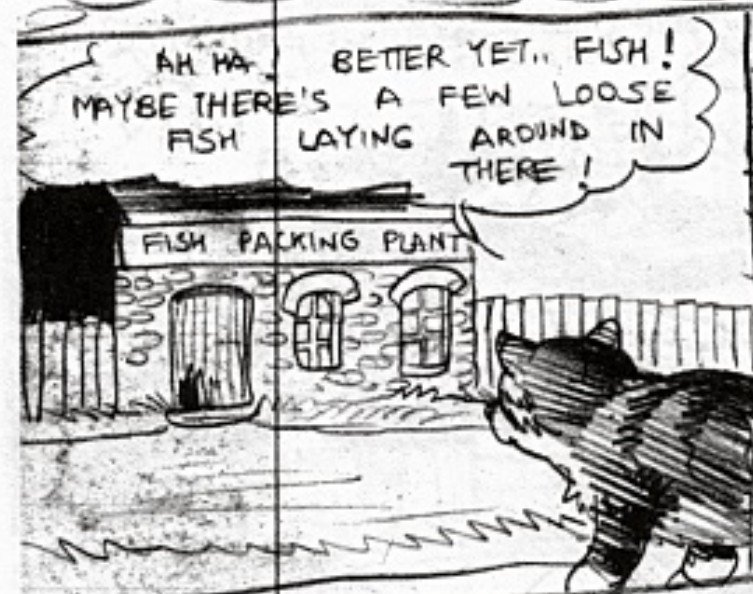
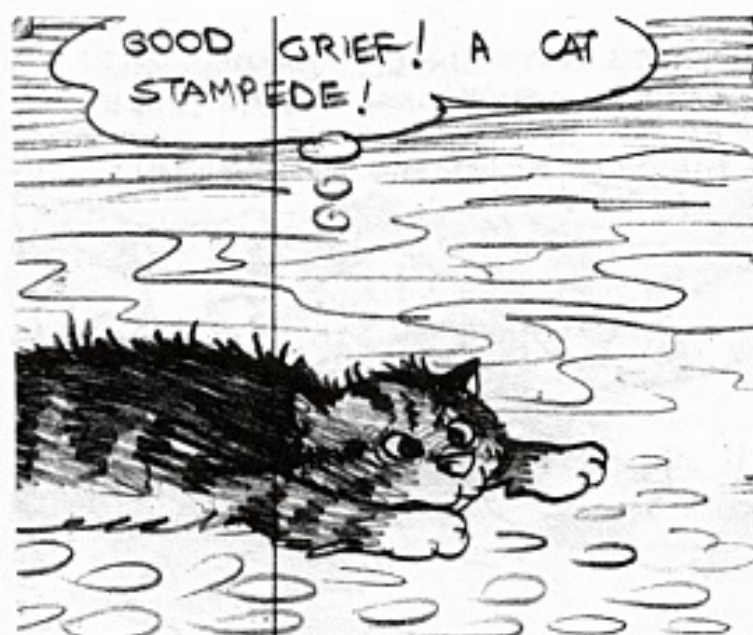
'S A GOOD THING TH' REST OF
US AREN'T OL' SCAREDY CATS
LIKE THAT!

YEAH... WE'RE
TOUGH! WE'RE
USED TO TH' ROUGH
LIFE IN THE CAT
WORLD!

THUD!

OOPS!
SOMEPI'N' IN
THE ROAD!







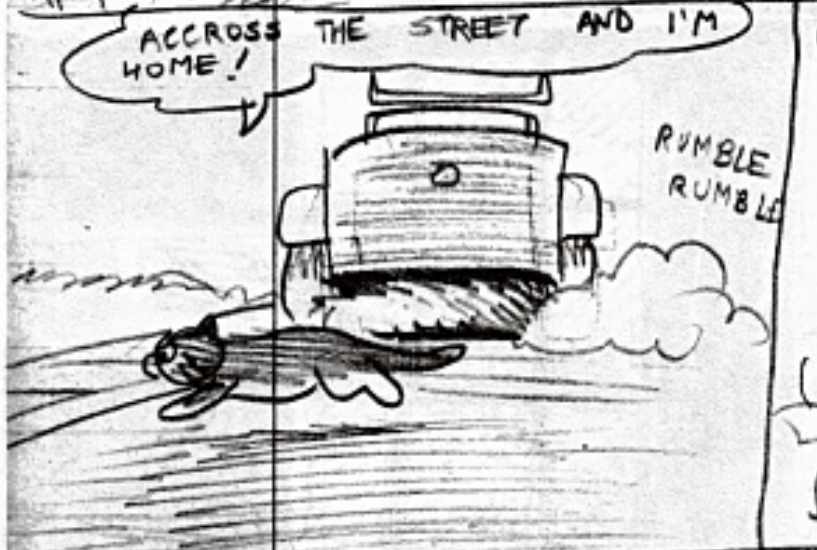


I'M GOING STRAIGHT HOME! I'VE HAD ENOUGH FOR ONE NIGHT!



LATER

AH! HOME AT LAST!



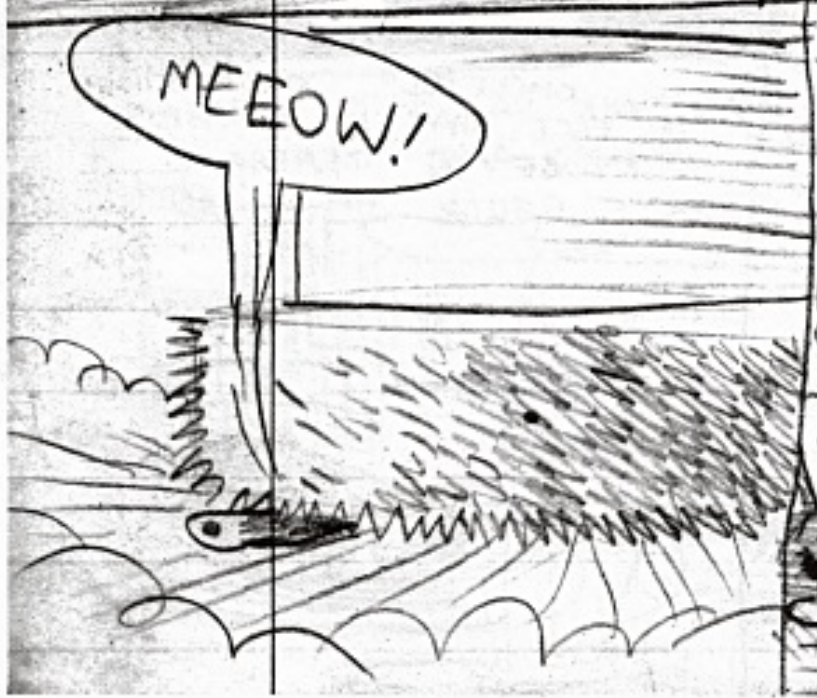
ACROSS THE STREET AND I'M HOME!

RUMBLE
RUMBLE



YEOW! THE STREET CLEANER HAS ENGULFED ME!

BRUSH BRUSH



MEEOW!



NEXT MORNING

LOOKIT THAT LAZY OL' CAT, FRED! WHAT AN EASY LIFE HE HAS... ALL HE EVER DOES IS EAT AN' SLEEP!

YAAH, SURE KID, SURE!

THE
END

ANIMAL TOWN

by
C. & R. CRUMB

MARCH 22 TO APRIL 3, 1960

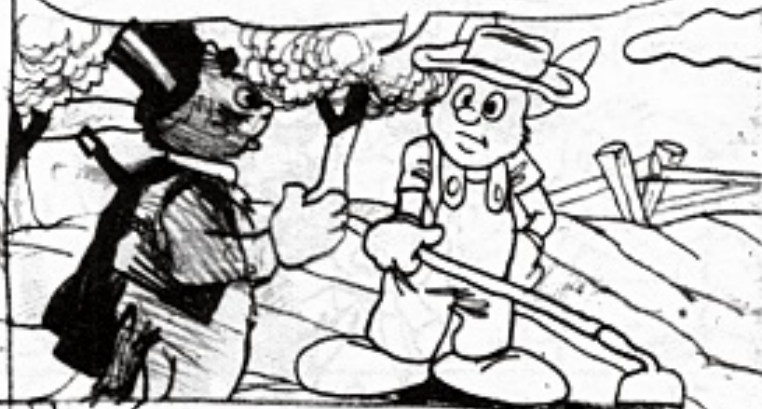
DARN! THAT LAST TOWN I GOT CHASED OUT OF DIDN'T HAVE A TRAIN TO NEW YORK OR EVEN ANYWAY TO MAKE CONNECTIONS BY RAIL-ROAD!



...AND HERE I AM, 100 DOLLARS ON ME, ON MY WAY TO FAME 'N' FORTUNE IN NEW YORK CITY, WALKING ON THE DUSTY ROAD IN THE HOT SUN!



GOOD MORROW, SIR! I AM WONT OF FOOD AND DRINK... WOULD YOU BE SO KIND AS TO OBLIGE, FOR A SMALL BIT OF ENTERTAINMENT?



WHY, I'D BE MIGHTY GLAD TOO, BROTHER... THAT IS IF YOU HOE MY GARDEN FOR ME... IT'LL TAKE Y' 'BOUT... OH... I'D SAY... BUT THREE OR FOUR HOURS. SUPPER AUGHT T' BE READY BY THAT TIME... HERE'S TH' HOE... GIT T' WORK...!



YOU DIDN'T THINK I WAS GONNA FEED Y' FER NOTHIN'... DID 'Y..

FEH!

YUK!





WELL SHERRIF, STOP LOOKING AT THOSE OLD PHOTOS OF ERROL FLYNN AND HELP ME THINK OF A WAY TO CAPTURE THAT ROBIN HOOD!

DOGGANE MUSTACHE WON'T STICK..... WON'T STAY ON....

EXCUSE ME, YOUR MAJESTY... WHILE I FETCH SOME PASTE SO'S I CAN GET THIS FOOL MUSTACHE TO STAY ON...

HA?

I'VE BEEN GIVEN TH' ROLE OF A VILLIAN IN THIS PRODUCTION. AND IF I'M TO BE A VILLIAN IT IS NATUREL THAT I POSSESS A MUSTACHE.

HMMM... THE JAR'S HALF EMPTY... THE ROYAL COOK MUST BE USING IT BY MISTAKE AGAIN FOR CAKE RECIPES.

ALLEN DALE PASTE

ALLEN DALE

SAY... YOUR EXCELLENCY... YOUR MUSTACHE IS STARTING TO FALL OFF..... YOU COULD USE SOME PASTE YOURSELF.

SPLOOP

ON WITH THE PLANS, DE LACY!



MEANWHILE, BACK IN SHERWOOD FOREST ...

I'D BETTER PRACTISE UP ON MY ARCHERY SO'S I CAN STORM THE CASTLE SINGLE HANDED AND RESCUE THE BEAUTIFUL MAID MARIAN!



I, ROBIN HOOD, THE MIGHTY ARCHER, ABLE TO SPLIT AN ARROW DOWN THE MIDDLE!!!



I, WHO MADE WALT DISNEY COME CRAWLING ... HAH...



DOGGONE BOW!!! FROM DETESTABLE WEAPON! TRY TO DO ME IN, WILL YE!



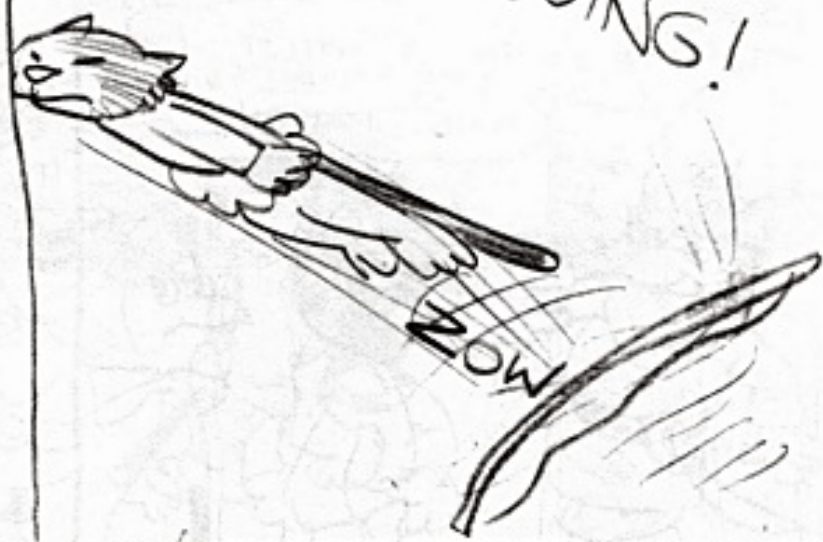
ARGH... THE VILE SUBTLE SNEAK ... TRIPPED ME!



UGH! GET BACK!
STAY WAY, BOW!



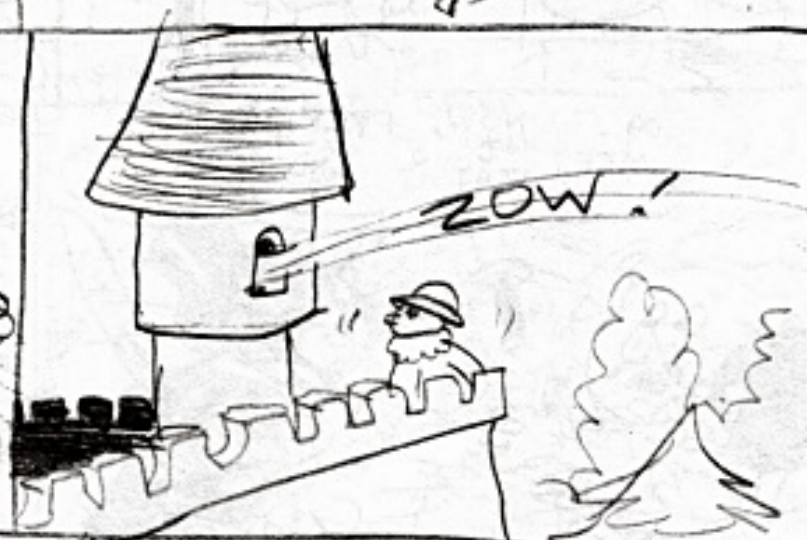
BOING!



GAD! I'VE BEEN
LAUNCHED!



ZOW!



WHY! I'VE LANDED IN THE CASTLE!
AND IN THE ROOM WHERE
MAID MARIAN IS IMPRISONED!



MAID MARIAN, ARE
YOU ALRIGHT!?

THE
AWFUL
PRINCE JOHN
HAS IMPRISONED
ME HERE... YOU'VE
COME TO SAVE ME!





ROBIN HOOD



STARRING
 FRITZ THE CAT...AS ROBIN HOOD
 MINERVA THE CHICK... MAID MARIAN
 BLACKY CROW.....SHERIFF OF NOTTINGHAM
 NERO THE PIG..... PRINCE JOHN
 FUZZY THE BUNNY.... A MERRYMAN
 BIG LOUIE..... LITTLE JOHN
 LITTLE LOUIE..... BIG JOHN
 PLUS
 A CAST OF THOUSANDS OF ROBOTS.

R. CRUMB
 12 MARCH '60

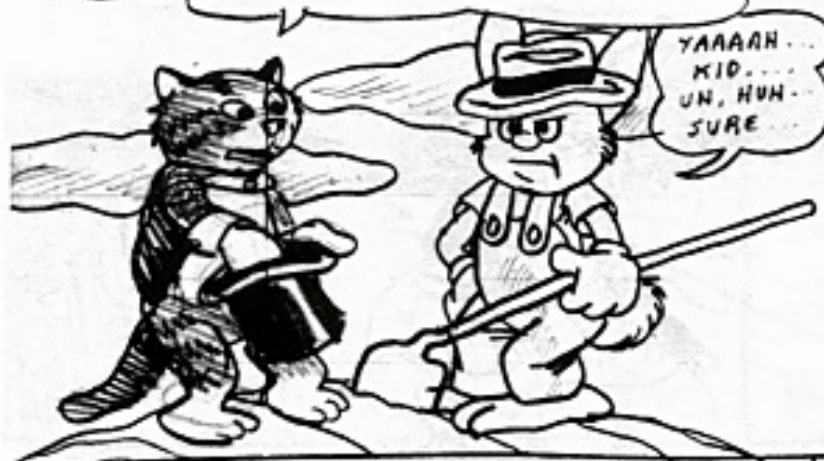
WELL, ME MERRY MEN, FORSCOTH,
 SHALL WE ENGAGE TO ROB THE
 RICH AND GIVE TO THE POOR
 TODAY? JUST FOR KICKS?

SILENCE, WHILE
 I PRACTICE
 MY ARCHERY.

AH! A BULLSEYE, ...
 BY JOVE.



BUT WAIT, WATCH WHAT I CAN DO, I
ISN'T A LITTLE BIT OF HAPPINESS
WORTH SOME FOOD TO YOU?



YAAAAH...
KID...
UN, HUH...
SURE...

...LAUGHTER, TO TAKE YOUR CARES
AWAY AND FOR A BRIEF BUT
HAPPY MOMENT, MAKE YOU FORGET
YOUR TROUBLES IN THIS WORKDAY
WORLD!-



WHO WAS THE LADY I SAW YOU
WITH LAST NIGHT, LI'L OBIDIAH!

THAT WAS NO LADY, THAT
WAS MY WIFE!

HA HA!



NOW OBIDIAH, YOU SING FOR US
WHILE I TAKE A DRINK OF WATER...

I'LL SING
"WAIT TILL THE
SUN SHINES, NELLY"



OH, WAIT TILL THE SUN (GLUG GLUG)
SHINES (GULP) NELLIE, WHEN THE
(GULG GLUG) CLOUDS GO (GULP)
DRIFTING BY, WE WILL BE HAPPY...
(GULP) NELLIE,



DON'T YOU.. (GLUG GULP CHOKE
COUGH / SPUT / GASP!



I GOT CHOKED UP, WELL,
ENOUGH OF THIS FOOL PUPPET,
HOW 'BOUT THAT MEAL NOW...

GOOD SHOW... MY
FINE FELLOW...
SPLENDID ENTERTAIN-
MENT... SUPERB...

CLAP

YESSIR... PURE GENIUS...
COME... YOU CERTAINLY
EARNED YOUR SUPPER WITH THAT
EXCELLENT DISPLAY OF TALENT
AND SKILL... COME TO MY
ABODE... I'LL HAVE MY
DEAR WIFE FRY YOU UP A
FISH DINNER...

YUM YUM!

MABEL, WE HAVE
THE PLEASURE OF HAVING
AS A DINNER GUEST A
DISTINGUISHED PERFORMER... A
STAR... A MR... AH...
ER... WHAT DID YOU SAY
YOUR NAME
WAS...
SIR?

FRITZ, SIR, FRITZ THE CAT,
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY, SHOWMAN,
AFTER-DINNER SPEAKER, AND POET...
ESQUIRE! CHARMED TO MEET THE
LITTLE WOMEN...

GRUNT

AH, MADAME, I'VE BEEN
TOLD OF YOUR MARVELOUS
COOKING, A NOBLE ART,
THE PREPARATION OF VICTUALS.
AH, YES, THERE SHE STANDS, MY
FRIEND, YOUR VERY WIFE, THE
MODEL OF GOOD HOME ECONOMICS...

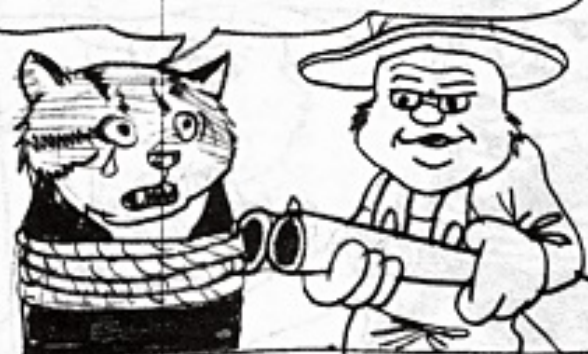
I PRESUME DINNER WILL BE
SERVED SHORTLY... HEH HEH...

GRUNT...

GRUNT



ALRIGHT, DEAR FRIEND,
CALL YOUR SHERIFF, BRING
ON YOUR LAW, LET THEM
DRAG ME OFF TO JAIL...
I REALIZE IT IS YOUR DUTY
AS AN HONEST CITIZEN TO BE...



A DIRTY, ROTTEN, NO-GOOD,
CHEAP, LOUSY, FILTHY, NEAN,
STINGY, CREEPY INFORMER...



...NOW, PERHAPS A FIVE SPOT
WOULD CHANGE YOUR MIND...
YOU DON'T WANT TO BE AN
INFORMER, DO YOU? WHAT WILL
PEOPLE THINK? YOU'LL LOSE
FRIENDS, YOUR CONSCIENCE WILL
BOTHER YOU... YOU WON'T SLEEP
AT NIGHT!

HAW... THAT'S O' GOOD 'UN...
IMAGINE THAT... YOU TRYIN'
T' BRIBE ME... WITH A
DAMN LOUSY FIVE BUCKS...
THAT'S RICH... C'MON NOW...
YOU CAN DO BETTER N' THAT...



HELL... TH' LAW
WILL AT LEAST REWARD ME
A NICE FAT FIFTY BUCKS
FER TURNING IN YOUR
MISERABLE HIDE...

WELL, IN THE VIEW OF THE
PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, I'LL
SUBMIT TO YOUR TERMS, HERE,
UNTIE ME, AND I'LL MAKE YOU
OUT A CHECK FOR A HUNDRED
DOLLARS!



A CHECK MY EYE...
WHAT DO YOU TAKE
ME FER... A FIRST
CLASS SUCKER...



I AIN'T O' GOIN' IN
MORGAN'S WOODS... THOSE
WOODS IS HAUNTED...
OL' MAN JEREMIAH MORGAN
USED T' LIVE IN THOSE
WOODS... ONE NIGHT
AN INSANE MAN WHAT
WAS OFF HIS ROCKER
SNUCK INT' MORGAN'S
HOUSE N' CHIPPED
MORGAN'S HEAD OFF
WITH A BUTCHER'S
CLEAVER.

NOW OL' MAN MORGAN
HAUNT'S THOSE WOODS...
IT'S BEEN SAID THAT AROUND
MIDNIGHT WHEN TH' MOON IS
ROUND N' FULL Y' KIN GO
O' WALKIN' THROUGH TH' WOODS
N' SEE TH' GHOST O' JEREMIAH
MORGAN PACIN' ABOUT O'
HOLDIN' HIS HEAD IN
HIS HANDS... NO SIR...
YOU WON'T GIT ME
T' GO IN
THOSE WOODS...
UH... UH...

SOOO... PAY UP
RIGHT HERE N' NOW
OR WE'LL GO BACK TO
TH' HOUSE
N' WAIT
FER TH'
SHERIFF...

DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE
AN IGNORANT AND SUPERSTITIOUS
BACKWARD FARMER, FOOLISH
ENOUGH TO BELIEVE IN SUCH
FOOLISHNESS
AS GHOSTS!

ONE HUNDRED
BUCKS OR
TH' SHERIFF...

BE MODERN, UP-TO-DATE!
DON'T YOU WANT TO KEEP UP
WITH THE TIMES? WHY, YOU'LL
LOSE YOUR SOCIAL STATUS...

OR, THEN AGAIN, MAYBE YER
JUST PLAIN SCARED O'
THOSE WOODS... MAYBE YOU'RE
NOT EVEN HALF A MAN... YOU'RE
PROBABLY JUST A COWARD... I'M
GLAD I'M NOT AFRAID OF SOME-
THING AS SILLY AS AN OL' WOODS,
LIKE SOME IGNORANT PEOPLE
WOULD BE!

ONE
HUNDRED
BUCKS
OR TH'
SHERIFF

ONE HUNDRED
BUCKS OR
TH'
SHERIFF

C'MON.... LET'S GO.
MAKE UP YER MIND...
TIME'S A WASTIN....
TH' SHERIFF WILL BE
COMIN' AROUND IN
A FEW MINUTES...
COUGH UP THAT
HUNDEAD YOU SAID
YOU WAS
GONNA PAY
ME...



BESIDE'S IT'S GITTIN'
DARN NEAR MIDNIGHT.
N' THAT OL' GHOST
MIGHT COME 'O PUTTERIN'
ROUND HERE N' I'D
KINDA LIKE T' GIT
BACK T' TH' HOUSE
N' LOCK TH' DOOR
N' BOLT TH'
WINDOWS...



OKAY, MISTER... IF YOU'RE
IN SUCH A HURRY TO GET
HOME, I'LL GIVE YOU THE
MONEY... YES, I'LL HAND OVER
THE HUNDRED DOLLARS, EVERY
CENT I HAVE TO MY NAME...



AND THEN I'LL GO MY WAY,
PENNILESS, STARVING, SUFFERING
THE STINGS OF OUTRAGEOUS
FORTUNE, THE VICTIM OF CIRCUM-
STANCES. (JOB)



AND THEN, ONE DAY, WHEN
YOU, IN YOUR FINE CLOTHES AND
WARM HOUSE, WITH YOUR LOVING
WIFE COOKING YOU A DELICIOUS
BREAKFAST OF HAM AND EGGS
DOUTN IN THE KITCHEN, YOU WILL
PICK UP YOUR NEWSPAPER, PIPING
HOT COFFEE IN HAND....



YES, YOU WILL PICK UP THE
MORNING PAPER, AND ON THE
FRONT PAGE, IN BIG BLACK HEADLINES,
THE WORDS WILL SCREAM OUT AT
YOU "FRITZ CAT, FAMOUS PHILOSOPHER,
AUTHOR, ARTIST, SHOWMAN (ESQ.) OF OUR
DAY, DIES OF STARVATION"...



YES, MY FRIEND, AND YOU CAN
THINK BACK THEN, THINK BACK...
AND YOU'LL KNOW THAT IT WAS YOU,
YOU, WHO DID IT... YOU WHO
WAS RESPONSIBLE...



YOU... (CHOKES)... YOU... YOU...
YOU... (SOS)

70. 80. 90...
100.

THANKS
SUCKER.



A HUNDRED DOLLARS...
A HUNDRED BUCKS...
I'VE NEVER HAD SO MUCH
MONEY..... I KIN LEAVE
THIS DOGGONE FARM...
I KIN LEAVE TH' LAND...
TH' HOEING... N' TH'
PLOWIN' N' TH' WEEDIN'



I'M TIRED O' WORKIN' N'
SWEATIN' LIKE O' STINKIN'
DOG ON TH' LAND... I'M
GONNA GO T' TH' CITY...
WHERE OPPERTUNITY N' FAME
N' FORTUNE AWAIT... I'LL
INVEST MY MONEY IN BANKS...
BIG BUISNESS... STOCKS...
I'LL GIT RICH N' WEALTHY
QUICKER N' YOU CAN SAY
JACK ROBINSON...



N' I'LL DRIVE AROUND
IN A LIMOUSINE WITH A
CHUAFFER N' I'LL LIVE IN
A FANCY HOUSE ON A
GREEN HILL WITH SERVANTS
N' COOKS... N' I'LL
WEAR A TALL SILK HAT N'
A DIAMOND IN MY NECK
TIE.....



WHERE Y'
GOIN' HARRY?
Y' AIN'T GONNA
LEAVE ME... AIA
Y' HARRY...?



I GOTTA GO
WOMAN... I'M
O' PACKIN' MY
SUIT CASE N'
I'M O' LEAVIN'
I'M SICK O'
TH' LAND
N' I'M SICK
O' YOU
I'M O' GOIN'
T' TH' CITY...



NO! NO HARRY...
YOU CAIN'T LEAVE ME
HARRY... I'VE TAKEN O'
LOT OFFEN YOU HARRY...
A HELL OF A LOT... FEA
YEARS N' YEARS... BUT
I'VE STAYED N' STUCK IT
OUT...

DON'T
TRY N'
STOP ME
MABEL-
M' MIND
IS MADE
UP.

WHY 'AVE I DONE IT,
HARRY... YOU ASKS ME
WHY? BECAUSE I LOVES
Y' HARRY... N' I NEEDS
YA... N' YOU NEEDS
ME... YOU CAN'T
LEAVE ME HARRY...
PLEASE HARRY...
(SOB)

DON'T RAISE O' STINK
WOMAN OR I'LL HAVE T' GO
OUT N' TH' BARN N' GIT TH'
BUGGY WHIP.

SOB...
BLUBBER...
BLAH...

OKAY... G'WAN Y' BUM...
GO T' TH' CITY... IF Y' THINK
THE'LL TREAT Y' BETTER THERE
G'WAN... G'WAN... BUT
BET YER BOTTEM DOLLAR
WHEN Y' LOSE ALL YER
MONEY... N' ALL YER FRIENDS
N' WHEN YER ALL ALONE
N' OUT IN THE COLD.

... YOU'LL COME O' CRAW'IN BACK
HERE... YOU'LL COME O'
CRAWL'IN BACK T' ME...
N' T' TH' LAND... WHERE
Y' B' LONG

FEH

HAW... HAW... I GUESS I HAD
THAT IGGNORENT HICK FOOLED.
BACK THERE AT THAT
FARMHOUSE I DID SOME
SNOOPING WHILE THEY WAS IN
THE KITCHEN... FOUND 473 OLD
DIRTY DOLLARS AND NINE PENNIES
HID IN A FLOWER POT...

GOOD THING I TOOK A
CORRESPONDENCE COURSE IN
FINDING MONEY IN HIDING PLACES...
I NOW HAVE 473.09 TO MY NAME.
I HATED TO LOSE THAT HUNDRED, BUT I
HAD TO SHIKE THAT FARMER OFF...



HE PROBABLY DIDN'T EVEN
KNOW THAT MONEY WAS IN
THERE... HIS WIFE WAS PROBABLY
HOURDING IT SECRETLY FOR A MINK
COAT OR SOMETHIN'!



HERE COMES A CAR... HOPE I
CAN GET A RIDE. I'M
FOOTSCORE AND WEARY...



SIR, GOOD EVENING, WOULD YOU
BE SO KIND AS TO PICK UP
A WEARY TRAVELER? IN SHORT
HOW BOUT A RIDE, BUDDY?



GIT IN TH' BACK N'
BE QUICK.....

WELL... IF IT AIN'T
MY OL' BUDDY PAL
FRITZ TH' CAT...
HOWDY OL' BWAH.

WHY, OL'
COLONEL
PICKWICK!



HEY! WHERE'D YOU GUYS GET
ALL THAT CASH!

WE'LL Y' SEE I
YES' JOINED UP
WITH BLACKY CROW'S
GANG.



AN' WE JUST FINISHED
ROBBIN' TH' CHEEY'S JUNCTION
FIRST NATIONAL BANK...



YEA... THERE I WAS...
WORKIN' MY LIFE AWAY... EIGHT
HOURS A DAY... SIX DAYS A
WEEK IN TH' CHEEY JUNCTION
CANNING FACTORY... THEN
ONE FINE DAY IT STRUCK ME
LIKE A BOLT O' LIGHTIN'...
I SAY'S T' M'SELF... THERE
MUST BE A BETTER WAY T'
MAKE O' LIVIN'... SEZ I.



SO IT WAS ONE NIGHT IN 'OLEARY'S
BILLARD PALOR THAT I MET MR.
WILY WEASAL HERE...

HOWDY
CHUM

SO WE HAD A GAME O'
POOL N' O' FEW DRINKS...
N' WILY TALKED ME INT'
JOININ' THE GANG.



BLACKY CROW, EY? HE WAS
THE ARCH-ENEMY OF NERO
THE PIG. NERO WAS THE
LEADER OF A MOB, I WAS
HIS RIGHT-HAND MAN, WE

FOUGHT BLACKY
CROW...



THEN NERO DISAPPEARED, AND HIS
GANG BUSTED UP... I GOT OUT
BEFORE THE COPS MOVED IN...
SOME OF THE BOYS ARE STILL
AROUND... THEY'VE SWORN TO GET
THE CROW AND PLANT HIM FOR
GOOD!



WHERE ARE YOU
HEADED? I'M GOIN'
BACK TO NEW YORK,
MYSELF!

WE'RE
O' GOIN'
TO OUR
HIDEOUT...
IN FACT
WE HAS
JUST ARRIVED.



LET'S
GET OUTA
TH' CAR

"C'MON MEN... LET'S
GO INSIDE N' COUNT
UP TH' LOOT N'
SPLIT IT UP EVEN-STEVEN
AMONGST OURSELVES....

WITH DE EYCEPTION
OF M'SELF. COURSE-
BETN' AS I IS
BOSS OF DIS LITTLE
GROUP I'LL BE GITTIN'
O' LITTLE MORE DEN
DE REST OF YOUSE.

WHO ORGANIZED
DIS OUTFIT-...?

YOU, BOSS-

WHO DOES
ALL TH' THINKIN'-ALL TH' BRAIN
WORK IN DIS OUTFIT?

YOU, BOSS...

WHO'S GOT THE ROBOT
ARMY... THAT'LL POUNCE
ON ANYONE WHO HE
COMMANDS 'IM TOO...
N' TEAR 'IM LITERALLY
TO PIECES.....

YOU DO...
BOSS...

WHO GETS DE BIGGEST
CUT IN DE LOOT-

YOU DO...
BOSS
YOU BET
I DO...

HAW HAW HAW....

BLACKY CROW... IT WAS YOU WHO HAD
NERO BUMPED OFF... YOU, YOU
FILTHY SCUM!

GIVE ME THE TRANSMITTER
WILEY... GIVE IT TO
ME... HAND IT OVER
HERE... LET'S HAVE IT...
C'MON...

YEH, BOSS...
I'LL GIT IT...

BOSS... I... I... I... I...
I... CAN'T FIND IT... I... I...
I... HAD IT RIGHT HERE IN
MY POCKET... BUT... I...

YOU CAN'T
FIND IT-

YOU STUPID FOOL... I
YOU IDIOT... YOU'LL RUIN
ME YET... I KILL
YOU-

COOL OFF, BOSS...
COOL OFF... I GOT
TH' TRANSMITTER... MEMBER?
DON'T YA MEMBER... T'WAS
ME YA GIVE IT TO...

GIVE ME THAT THING
YOU THICK-SKULLED
NINCOMPOOP-

EASY, BOSS-

NOW FOR YOU... FLEA FARM!
ALL I HAVE TO DO IS PUSH
THIS LITTLE WHITE BUTTON
ON THIS HERE TRANSMITTER
AND A HUGE ARMY OF ROBOTS
UNDER MY CONTROL WILL
COME FORTH POUNCE UPON
YOU N' RIP YOU INTO
LITTLE PIECES...

SO BUZZ

THERE COMIN'... LISSSEN...
Y' KIN HEAR 'IM...
SAY YER PRAYER,
FLEA FARM.

CLANK -
CLANK -
CLANK
CLANK
CLANK



THERE HE IS FELLOWS,
GIT 'IM... GRAB
'IM... TEAR 'IM
UP... MAKE
SHREDDED
WHEAT OUT OF
'IM -

MAMMY!



HEY WAIT FELLA'S...
STAY AWAY FROM ME...
IT'S TH' CAT.... NOT ME...
GIT AWAY.....

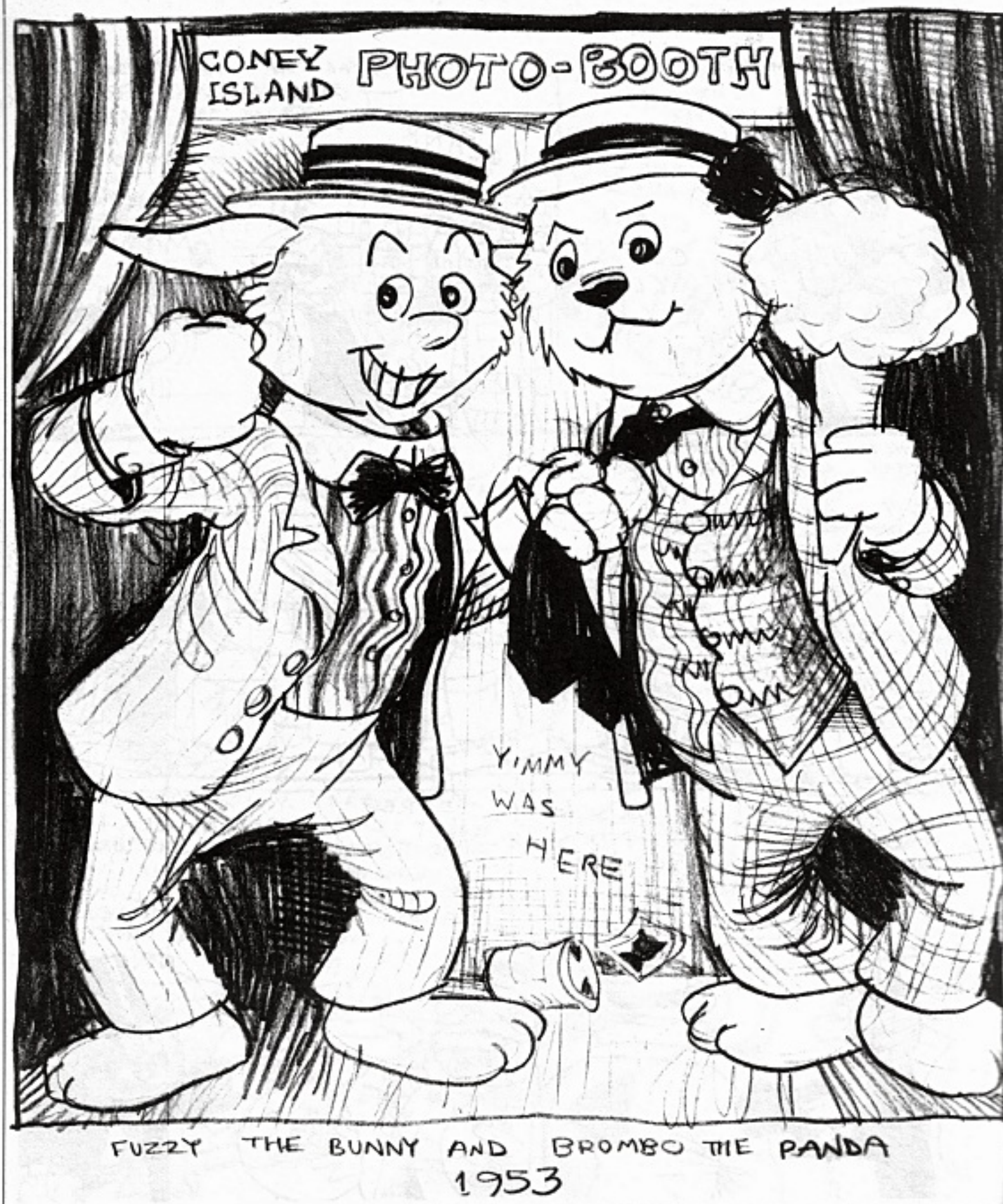
NO... NOOO...
AIEEEE



WELL, GUESS THAT'S THE END OF
BLACKY CROW... HE TAMPERED
WITH THE UNKNOWN, AND IT
DESTROYED HIM...

THE REST OF YOU GUYS
WOON'T LAST MORE'N A WEEK
WITHOUT BLACKY, HE WAS THE BRAINS,
THE LAW WILL BE GET Y'! ... OR
NERO'S GANG.... YOU'RE ALL
THROUGH... THROUGH, SEE?
THROUGH!





FUZZY THE BUNNY AND BROMBO THE PANDA
1953

R. CRUMB

22 JUNE 1959
TO M. PAHLS

ALMANAC



DRINKING
DOESN'T
PAY



A. CRUMB

R. CRUMB

ALMANAC



R. CRUMB GOES TO NEW YORK

H. CRUMB

ALMANAC

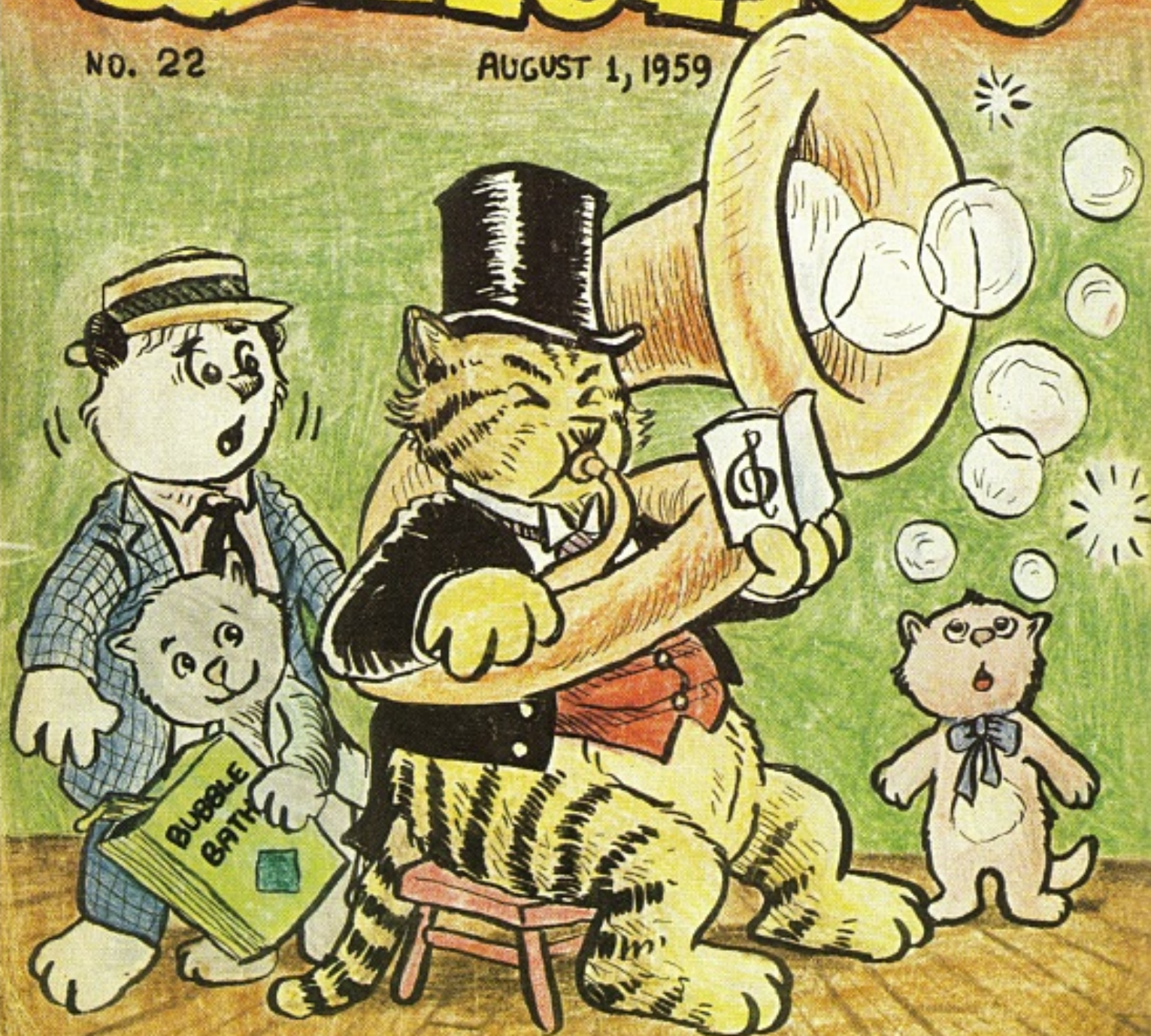


R. CRUMB

amano

NO. 22

AUGUST 1, 1959



SEPT. 5, 1959

R. CRUMB'S NOTE to M. PAHL'S

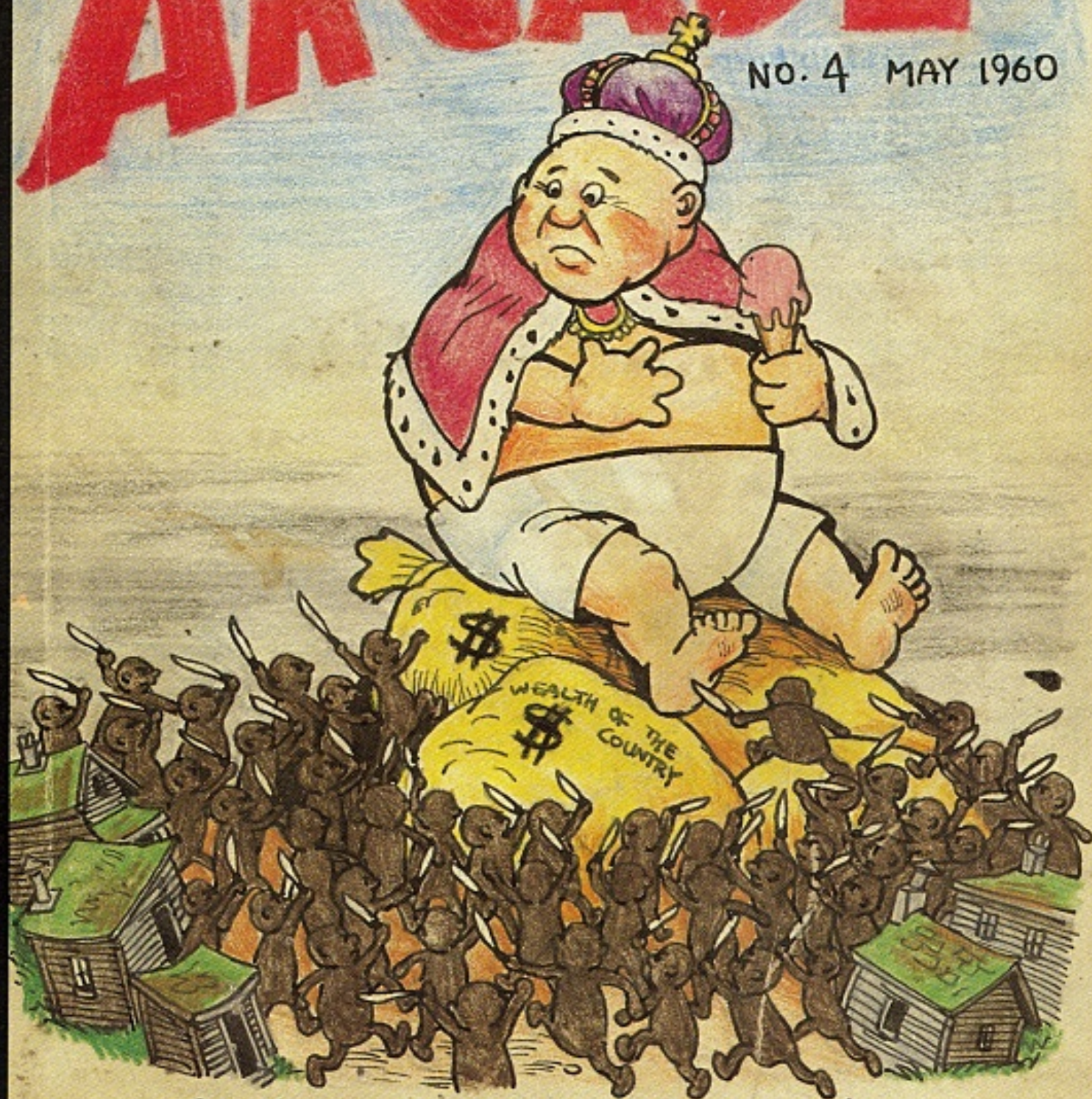
AT LAST! OUR WORK IS
DONE! IT WAS WORTH IT, DON'T
YOU THINK?

.....JUST A
SECOND!



ARCADE

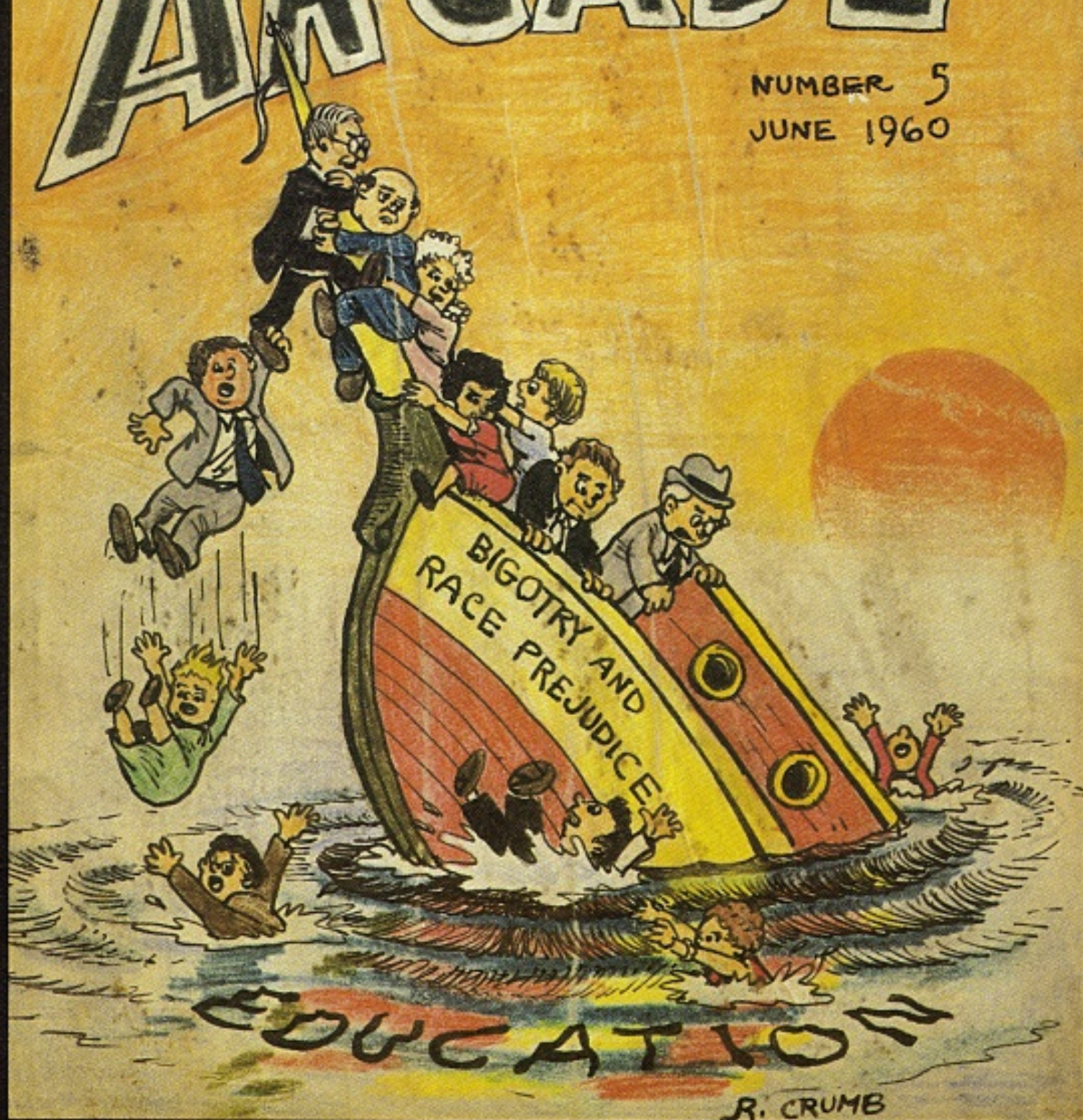
NO. 4 MAY 1960



THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION OF 1960

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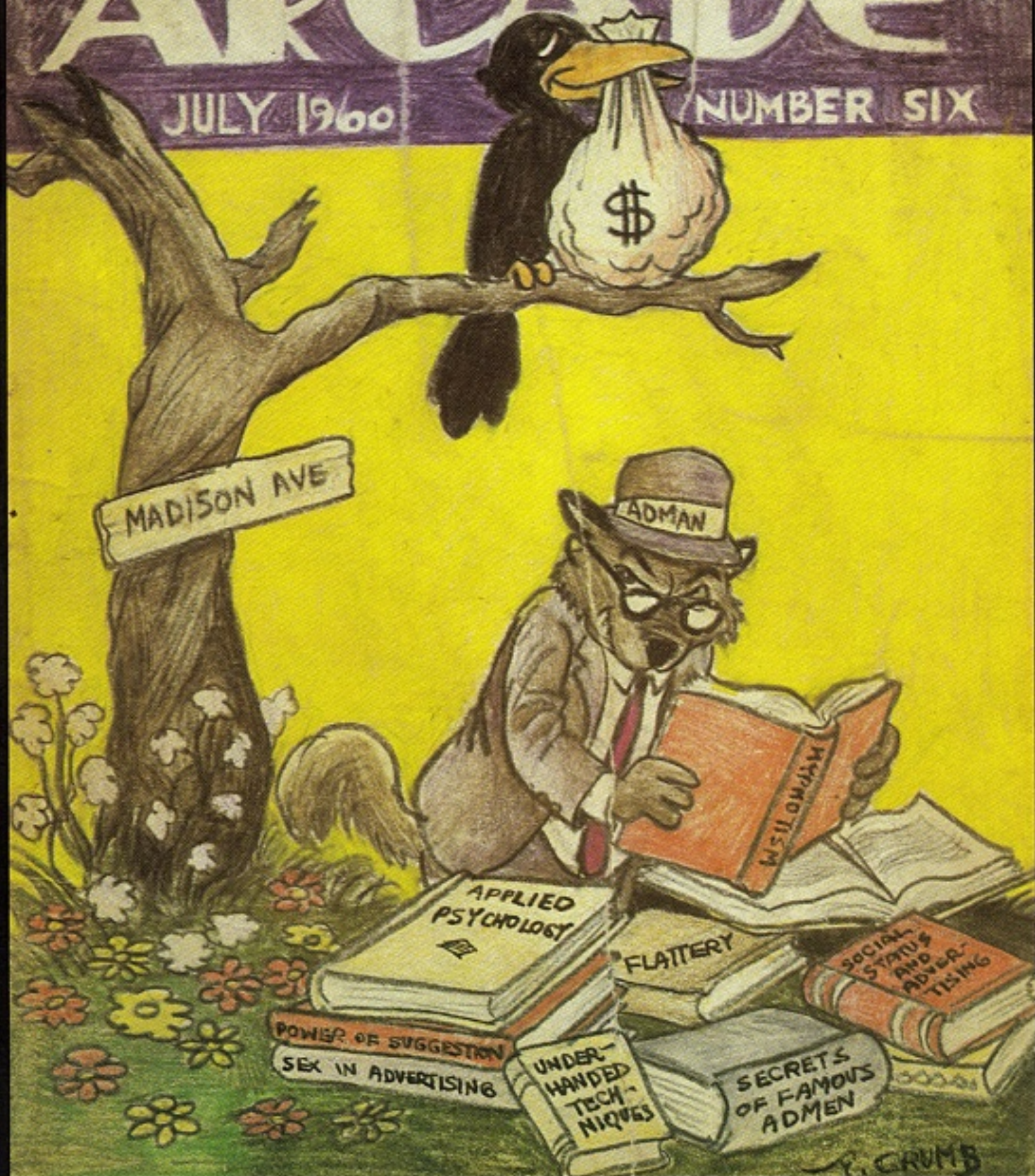
NUMBER 5
JUNE 1960



ARCADE

JULY 1960

NUMBER SIX



A CHRISTMAS TALE

by
R. Crumb

AUTHORED AND ILLUSTRATED IN DECEMBER, 1960.







WHAT YOU TRYIN' TO DO,
BUST UP OUR MARRIAGE?
YOU'RE A HOMEWRECKER!
A PLAYBOY! A GIGILO!

YEAH! YOU WASHER!

BUT - BUT -



DON'T WORRY DEAREST!
I'M HERE NOW! I'LL
PROTECT YOU FROM HARM!

SIGH! ISN'T IT
WONDERFUL
WHAT CHRIST-
MAS DOES
TO PEOPLE?



MAKES YOU
WANT TO MEND
THE OLD WOUNDS!
REVIVE OLD
HAPPINESS!

YES! CHRISTMAS
IS INDEED
A GLORIOUS
OCCASION!



WELL! NOW THAT
WE'VE ALL FALLEN
INTO THE YULETIDE
SPIRIT OF GLADNESS, I
SUGGEST WE PROCEED AT ONCE
TO SINGING CAROLS IN THE STREETS!

NO, I... AH... DON'T
THINK SO, FRITZ, OLD
MAN... MY WIFE AND
I... WED SORTA LIKE
TO SPEND THE EVENING
TRIMMING THE TREE...
I'M SURE YOU UNDERSTAND...
HEH...

ER... YAH, SURE!

MERRY CHRISTMAS FRITZ!

YES! MERRY
CHRISTMAS!
LIKEWISE,
AND A HAPPY
NEW YEAR!



HELLO LITTLE BOY, WHAT ARE
YOU DOING?

OH! JUST SITTING HERE
WATCHIN' THE SNOW 'N'
THINKING OF WHAT I'N
GONNA ASK SANTA CLAUS
FOR NEXT CHRISTMAS!

NEXT CHRISTMAS?



UH HUH! I ALREADY
TOLD HIM WHAT I WANTED
THIS CHRISTMAS! NOW
I GOTTA FIGURE OUT WHAT
I'M GONNA ASK HIM FOR
NEXT YEAR!

WOULD YOU LIKE TO
GO CHRISTMAS CAROL
SINGING WITH ME, LITTLE
BOY?

NO.



SIGH.



10 DECEMBER '60

ARCADE



COMIC STRIP

HEY, FELLA, LOOKA THAT HOT ENGINE, VILLA! CHEEZ! LOOKA THERE! BOY, THA'S REALLY HOPPED UP, BWAH!



THIS "HOT ENGINE" OF YOURS, MY FRIEND, IS SHALLOW AND MEANINGLESS, IT IS THE SYMBOL OF THE MECHANICAL IMPERCEPTIVENESS WHICH IS PREVALENT OUR COUNTRY!

HUH?



YES! THIS SHOWS THE DECLINE OF CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND A TENDENCY TOWARD DEGENERATION OF THE MENTALITY OF OUR SOCIETY!

WHATH HELL YOU TALKIN' ABOUT, FELLA?



THIS, SHALL WE CALL IT, PASSION YOU HAVE FOR AUTOMOBILES IS THE VERY ESSENCE OF IGNORANCE, AND DETERIORATION OF VALUES CAUSED MAINLY BY THE RISE OF THE PLUTOCRATIC CLASS IN AMERICA.

WHY DON'T YEW SHUTCHA GODDAMN FAT MOUTH, FELLA!



YOU NEED MECHANICAL POWER TO MAKE UP FOR YOUR LACK OF.....

I SAID SHUT UP, YOU BASTARD!

OOF!



INSIDE, HE KNOWS I'M THE ONE WHO REALLY WON THAT FIGHT!



THREE LITTLE BOYS



THE ADMIRER

BY R. CRUMB

HER FACE IS A THING OF DAZZLING BEAUTY! HER FEATURES ENTHRALL ME! HER CHARM IS ANGELIC! A WONDER OF NATURE!



AN URGE SWELLS WITHIN MY HEART TO PARTAKE OF THIS BEAUTY! A FORCE THAT IS LIFE ITSELF COMPELS ME TO COMMUNICATE WITH HER! I MUST KNOW HER! I'VE GOT TO MEET HER!



AH... HI THERE! I NOTICED YOU SITTING HERE ALL ALONE, AND SO I... UM... THOUGHT YOU MIGHT ENJOY SOME COMPANY, SO I CAME OVER!

SURE PAL! SIT DOWN! I WAS JUST HAVIN' A DRINK!



HER EVERY GESTURE! HER EVERY MOVEMENT IS SOMETHING TO BEHOLD! HER SMILE LIGHTS UP THE UNIVERSE! HER EYES ARE MORE PRECIOUS THAN DIAMONDS!



ETERNAL BLISS WILL BE MINE IF I CAN BRING OUR SOULS TOGETHER AS ONE! HEAVEN AND EARTH WILL BE OURS TO SHARE... USE TACT, BWAH!



SAY, LISTEN! I HATE THIS CRUDDY DUMP! I GOT A REAL CUTE APARTMENT... WHY DON'T WE BUY A COUPLE BOTTLES AND GO ON OVER THERE! IT'S JUST DOWN TH' STREET AN'...

SIGH... NATURE HAS FLAWS, I FIND!



ON MOVIE MAGS

OH BOY! THIS LATEST ISSUE OF "SCREEN-TV SECRETS" REALLY HAS SOME EXCITING ARTICLES... LOOK AT THIS ABOUT LIZ AN' EDDIE... GEE!

PHOOEY! THOSE MOVIE MAGS ARE NOTHIN' BUT BUNK!



OH! AND HERE'S A STORY ABOUT DEBBIE'S MARRIAGE TO HARRY KARL! BY DEBBIE HERSELF, AS TOLD TO LANCE SMURD! DEBBIE'S SO SWEET! I DON'T LIKE THAT HARRY KARL'S LOOKS.

THE WAY SHE GOBBLES IT UP! IT'S PITIFUL... THAT STUFF IS ALL LIES OR PUBLICITY!



DON'T YOU THINK IT'S REALLY A SHAME THAT ELVIS ISN'T MARRIED? IT SAYS HERE HE'S SECRETLY ENGAGED! GOSH! I WONDER WHO THE GIRL IS!

SHE READS SO MUCH OF THAT TRIPE! IT'S BRAIN-WASHING HER! POOR SOUL!



ISN'T IT EXCITING? I MEAN BOBBY AND SANDRA'S ELOPING AND ALL! OH! WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT—THEY MAKE SUCH A SWEET COUPLE THOUGH!

HER POOR INNOCENT MIND IS BEING CORRUPTED, DEGENERATED, DISSILLUSIONED! ITS TRAGIC!



SHE'S THE VICTIM OF THIS CRAZY SOCIETY WE LIVE IN. AN INNOCENT LAMB IN THE CLUTCHES OF CREEPY WOLVES! IT MAKES MY HEART ACHIE FOR HER!

GHASP! IT SAYS HERE THAT FABIAN IS HEADED FOR A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN! OH, THAT'S AWFUL!



SOB

HEY... COME NOW, IT ISN'T THAT BAD! IT'S NOTHIN' TO CRY ABOUT! MY GOSH! I'M SURE HE'LL GET OVER IT OKAY!



THE ART MUSEUM

AH! DEGAS! BEAUTIFUL!
SUCH POWER! OBSERVE THE
RICHNESS OF COLOR! THE
BALANCE!

AH YES!



LAUTREC! NOW THERE'S
MY BOY! "CHILPERIC"...SUCH
SWEEPING FORM!..BRILLIANCE
OF COLOR! BLENDING OF
LIGHTS AND DARKS!

AH YES!



ROUSSEAU! LOOK AT THE
FEELING IN THAT! THE BURN-
ING LOVE THAT IS EXECUTED
SO BEAUTIFULLY IN THE BRUSH-
WORK!

AH YES!



VAN GOGH'S "A STARRY
NIGHT"...EVERY STROKE IS A
MOMENT OF SUFFERING! EVERY
SHAPE AND FORM IS AN OUTLET
FOR HIS INNER STRIFES!

AH YES!

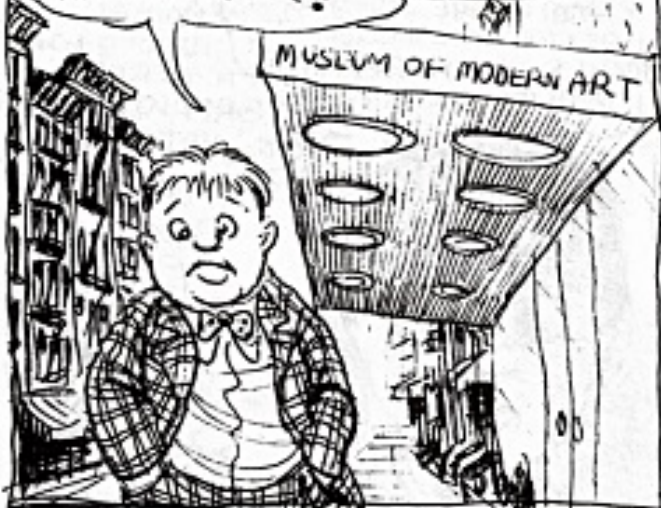


SAY, DIDJA EVER SEE
THAT SWELL PICTURE BY
NORMAN ROCKWELL OF THE ...

NORMAN ROCKWELL!



I GUESS I'LL GO GET A
HAMBURGER!



COMIC STRIP by R. CRUMB

FOR CHRISSE! A TEST TODAY!
I FORGOT ALL ABOUT IT!

TAKE 'EM DOPE!



OH GOD.... HMM... HMM...MM....
-SHEESH... DON'T KNOW A SINGLE
ANSWER ON THIS STUPID TEST! GOD!
I WHY DIDN'T I STUDY LAST NIGHT
STEAD OF GOIN' OUT!?



WILL FLUNK THIS TERM FOR
SURE NOW! 'N' THEN 'LL CATCH
HELL FROM MOM 'N' DAD 'N' I'LL
GET A BIG LECTURE FROM THE
TEACHER ON HOW I'VE GOT TH'
ABILITY (WHICH OF COURSE I DO)
BUT DON'T USE IT, AND THEN
TH' PRINCIPLE WILL CALL UP MY
FOLKS AN' TELL 'EM HOW I'M IN
DANGER OF FAILING THE YEAR..



AN' THEN THEY'LL CUT OFF MY
ALLOWANCE 'N' PUT ME ON RE-
STRICTION 'N' I WON'T BE ABLE
TO TAKE KATHY OUT AN'....



AHH ME!



WHAT A GIRL!



3 MAY
1961



A COMIC STRIP BY R CRUMB

AN OBSERVATION ON THE NATURE
OF TEENAGE FEMALES, WHICH
IS POSSIBLY WRONG.

— 12 MAY 1961

ALRIGHT ALREADY!

NO...
MORE!
MORE!



COME ON, JUST A FEW
MORE MINUTES. C'MON, YOU DON'T
HAVE TO GO YET. WHAT'S YER
BIG HURRY...

BUT I—



FOR GOD'S SAKE, ROY... WE'VE BEEN
SITTING HERE ALL NIGHT NECKING
AND DOING ALL THOSE THINGS LIKE
MAD... JESUS! I'M TIRED... LET
ME GO!

OKAY... OKAY...



GIT TH' HELL OUTA TH' CAR...
SO LONG!



THESE BOYS! DAMN 'EM! THEY
THINK THEY CAN DO ANYTHING
THEY WANT! WHENEVER THEY
FEEL LIKE IT! AN' ALL THEY
WANT IS SEX, SEX, SEX! NOTHIN'
ELSE!



MM! YOU SEXY LITTLE
THING, YOU!



COMIC STRIP BY R. CRUMB



COMIC STRIP BY R. CRUMB - 13 MAY 1961

WELL, BACK TA SCHOOL FOR ANOTHER WHOLE WEEK! I ALWAYS HATE IT TH' MOST ON MONDAY!

YEAH, ME TOO!



THAT OL' CRAB MISS MEGGS IS ALWAYS PICKIN' ON ME! ONE TIME SHE KEPT ME IN AT RECESS, AND BEAT ME IN THE BACK AS HARD AS SHE COULD!

DID SHE!?



I TOLD MY MOTHER AN' SHE WENT DOWN FOR SCHOOL TA SEE MISS MEGGS ABOUT IT.

WHAT HAPPENED?



OL' LADY MEGGS SAID I WAS HARD TO DISCIPLINE AND ALL THAT STUFF BUT MOM REALLY TOLE HER OFF GOOD!

DID SHE?



YOU SHOULD'VE BEEN THERE! MOM CALLED HER A FRUSTRATED OL' MAID AN' WALKED OUT... HA HA. I WAS STANDIN' OUTSIDE THE ROOM WATCHIN'... TH' OL' WITCH DIDN'T KNOW I WAS THERE 'N' SHE STARTED CRYIN'... HA HA HA...

GOSH...



HA HA HA HA HA
GEE! MISS MEGGS CRYIN'!... BOY! I WISH I'D SEEN IT! BOY! THAT'S SOMETHIN'!



WELL, SIR, AFTER NINE YEARS OF ISOLATED STUDY AND METICULOUS LABOR, MY CONTRIBUTION TO MANKIND IS COMPLETE... AND ANOTHER "FIRST" FOR THE U.S.A.!



PATIENCE, AMERICA, PATIENCE! HISTORY IS BEING MADE BEFORE YOUR VERY EYES, SHIFFIKINS! BOY, WHEEL IT IN HERE, AND IN SO DOING, BRING ON A NEW AGE!



...AND NOW, HERE, TODAY, MAY 13, 1961, THE UNVEILING OF WHAT WAS BUT A DREAM UNTIL TODAY... THE ULTIMATE ACHIEVEMENT OF CENTURIES OF HOPES AND FEARS... (REMOVE THE CLOTH, BOY)...



BEHOLD, AMERICA... FEAST YOUR EYES ON THIS... THE SYNTHETIC MAN!



HE WALKS, TALKS, EATS, DRINKS; HE EVEN WEETS... THINK OF THE BOON TO CIVILIZATION! I CALL HIM ADAM II... I CAN TALK TO HIM! SMILE FOR US, ADAM II!



I SAID SMILE, ADAM II!... AW COME ON! I KNOW YOU CAN DO IT, ADAM II! DON'T BE SHY! SMILE! PLEASE SMILE?



COMIC STRIP BY R. CRUMB 22 MAY 1961



ATTENTION, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! YOUR ATTENTION PLEASE!



YOUR PATIENCE HAS BEEN GREATLY APPRECIATED AND YOUR LONG WAITING WILL NOT GO UNREWARDED! YOU, THE PRIVILEGED FEW, WILL BE THE ONLY ONES TO SEE THE BIRTH OF THE SYNTHETIC MAN!



WHO IS NOW PREPARED TO BE PRESENTED TO THE WORLD (AFTER ONE UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPT)! I SHALL BE DISPOSED TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS CONCERNING ADAM II AFTER THE INITIAL DEMONSTRATION!



YIMMY, M'BOY... UNVEIL ADAM II, SO THAT THESE GOOD PEOPLE MAY GAZE IN AWE AT THE GREATEST WONDER OF THE WORLD!



AND THERE IT IS! YEE LADIES AND GENTLEMEN. THERE STANDS THE FIRST SYNTHETIC MAN!



YOUR ATTENTION, CITIZENS OF AMERICA (LAND OF THE FREE AND HOME OF THE BRAVE)! ADAM II CAN DO ANYTHING A REAL LIVE PERSON CAN DO! HE WALKS, TALKS, EATS, DRINKS, WEETS... ANYTHING!



IT'S AMAZING, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! THINK OF IT! THIS SYNTHETIC MAN, PRODUCED ON A MASS BASIS, CAN PERFORM ALL THE LOWLY LABORS OF THE WORLD. THE MENTAL TASKS THAT HAVE BURDENED MANKIND UNTIL THIS GREAT DAY!



RUSSIA WON'T HAVE A CHANCE AGAINST US NOW! WE CAN SEND SHIPLOADS OF THESE SYNTHETIC MEN TO THE YOUNG NATIONS! GAIN BACK OUR LOST PRESTIGE! WIN FRIENDS FOR DEMOCRACY! MAKE MONEY!



THINK OF IT, AMERICANS! NO LONGER WILL WE HAVE TO WASTE ENERGY ON LOWLY LABOR. YOUR EVERY WISH IS THE SYNTHETIC SLAVE'S COMMAND! EVERY MAN CAN SPEND HIS LIFE AT THE COUNTRY CLUB, ON THE GOLF COURSE, OR AT THE BEACH!



YOU LADIES... JUST CONSIDER! THIS DAY YOU ARE DESTINED TO COMPLETE EMANCIPATION FROM HOUSEHOLD SLAVERY! THE FRUSTRATION, THE BOREDOM OF UNREWARDING HOUSEWORK IS A THING OF THE PAST!



WHY... THE SYNTHETIC MAN HAS WORLD-WIDE SIGNIFICANCE... HIS INCEPTION WILL PROVE TO END ALL WARS... END HUNGER, STARVATION, IGNORANCE... THE DAY OF THE UTOPIA IS AT HAND! MEY! WHA-A-





IT'S ALL BECAUSE HE TAMPERED WITH THE UNKNOWN!

YES! HIS OWN GENIUS LED TO HIS DESTRUCTION!



OH! LOOKS LIKE I'M TOO LATE FOR THE GRAND UNVEILING OF ADAM II... IT'S ALL OVER!

IT CERTAINLY IS!



HOW DID IT GO!

WELL, TELL YOU HOW IT WENT!

BWOM!

THAT'S HOW IT WENT... THE THING EXPANDED LIKE A BALLOON... SCARED EVERYONE AWAY... THEN, AS IF BY THE HAND OF SATAN HIMSELF... **BWOM!** AND THE END OF ADAM II...



TSK, TSK... TOO BAD THE PROJECT HAS BEEN SUCH A FAILURE!

FAILURE? FAILURE? MY FRIEND... NEVER SAY DIE! THAT'S MY MOTTO! AND/OR... IF AT FIRST YOU DON'T SUCCEED, ETCETERA, ETCETERA!



ONLY A FEW SLIGHT MISCALCULATIONS TO IRON OUT... NO OBSTACLE IS TOO GREAT TO OVERCOME! MY LIFE IS GIVEN TO THE CAUSE! THE UTOPIA IS AT HAND, MY FRIEND! MANKIND STANDS ON THE BRINK OF PARADISE! THE SYNTHETIC MAN IS THE SECRET OF HAPPINESS! CONSIDER, IF YOU WILL, MY FRIEND, THE GREAT POTENTIAL...



GAK!

WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?



WHAT IS THIS CONGREGATING ON THE STREETS? THIS VIOLENT SHOUTING? WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?



A DEMONSTRATION AGAINST SOCIAL INJUSTICE... COME, JOIN US, FRIEND, IF PUTTING DOWN THE TYRANTS...

WHAT! NO! AND ALAS! NOT VIOLENCE, I HOPE! ... SURELY WE DONOT HAVE TO RESORT... NO... NO... THIS IS A COMMUNIST EXHIBITION...



WE STAND HERE ON THE CORNER AND STAKE OUR FISTS WHEN EVER A BILLY, CAPITALISTIC PIG GOES BY!



COMRADES! HERE COMES ONE NOW!

BOO! DOWN WITH THE PLUTOCRATS!! BAH!



HISS!

GRAY!

SCUM! DIRT!

UP WITH THE PROLETARIAT

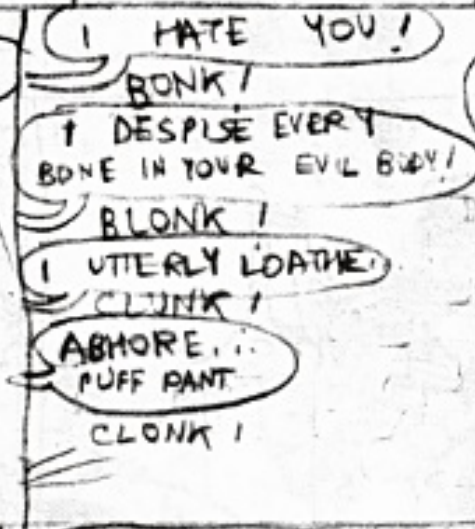
SOMETIMES I THINK I OUGHT TO GO LIVE IN A CAVE IN THE MOUNTAINS AND LIVE ON WILD BERRIES AND GOAT'S MILK... AND SEEK THE TRUTH... NO...



[8 JUNE 1961]

FRITZ THE CAT, SNIFF THE PANDA, FLOSSY THE PANDA AND OTHERS IN:
R. CRUMB'S ANIMAL TOWN COMICS





OH, DEAR! ME... DEAR! ME... WE WERE SUPPOSED TO GO ON A PICNIC TODAY, WEREN'T WE?

AM YES, MY DEAR OLD FRIEND... THIS FINE MAY MORNING WAS THE DATE WE SET... MY VERY REASON FOR COMING OVER JUST NOW...



BUT, AFTER THE HOLOCAUST WHICH I HAVE JUST WITNESSED, IT APPEARS THAT THAT IDLE DREAM WILL HAVE TO BE GIVEN UP TO THE STERNER FACE OF REALITY!!

NAMELY, MY WIFE!



SAY! THAT'S MY DEPARTMENT HEAD AT THE COMPANY COMIN' DOWN THE STREET... MR. DENNY... THEY'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT GIVING ME A PROMOTION AND A RAISE OUT THERE... WHAT A TIME FOR HIM TO SHOW UP...



OH, HI THERE MR. DENNY!

SNIFF! DIDN'T KNOW YOU LIVED IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD! GOOD TA SEE YOU, FELLA!



WHY, IF IT ISN'T MR. DENNY... HOW NICE TO SEE YOU! SNIFF AND I WERE JUST SAYING HOW MARVELOUS IT WOULD BE IF WE COULD GET TOGETHER SOMETIME FOR A BEACH PARTY!

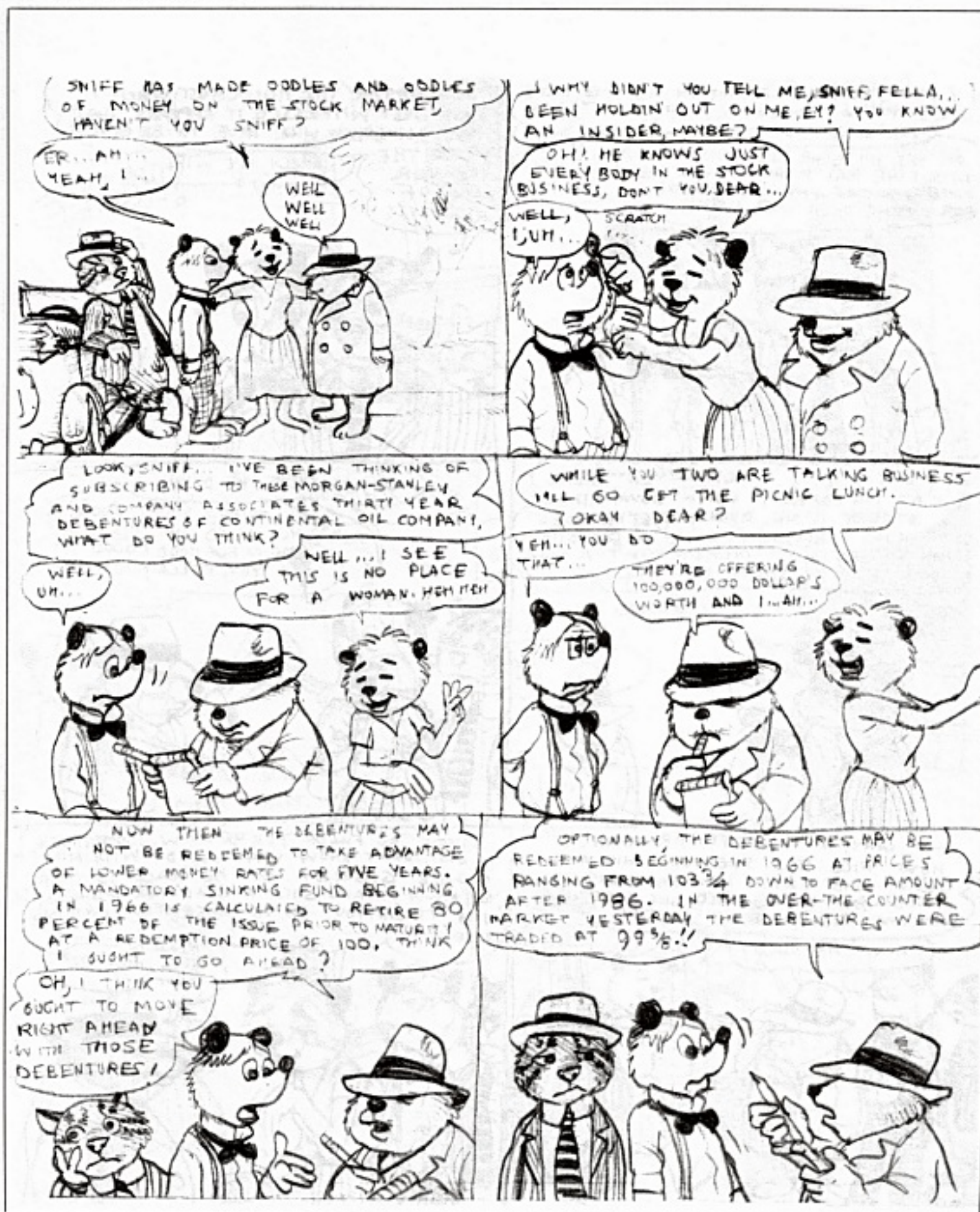
MORNIN', MRS. PANDA!



SNIFF'S SO FULL OF FUN, YOU KNOW... SOMETIMES I JUST DON'T KNOW WHAT I'LL DO WITH HIM! GIGGLE GIGGLE! BUT HE REALLY IS SMART, YOU KNOW! AND SUCH A HEAD FOR BUSINESS, I'M TELLIN' YOU! YOU'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT!

REALLY? WELL HOW 'BOUT THAT!







I DON'T CARE! I'VE GOT THE RIGHT TO GET OUT OF THAT DREARY LITTLE HOUSE ONCE IN A WHILE! AND YOU CARE IF I EVER HAVE FUN... YOU... YOU... SELF-CENTERED... COLD-HEARTED... UH... BRUTE!

YEAH!

OKAY... OKAY... SO WE'LL GO ON THE PICNIC...

YOU JUST BET WE WILL!!

LET'S HAVE OUR PICNIC DOWN ON SUNSHINE BEACH. IT'LL BE MARVELOUS DOWN THERE TODAY! THE AMUSEMENTS SHOULD BE OPENING UP FOR THE SUMMER ABOUT NOW!

SUNSHINE BEACH IT IS!

BRUMM
BRUMM

DA BE DA
TUM TE TUM!

WACH

HEY! WHERE YA GOIN'! THIS ISN'T
THE WAY TO SUNSHINE BEACH...
WE'RE DOWN TOWN!

AM YES...DOWN
TOWN WE ARE TO
BE SURE!

DON'T YOU REMEMBER? FRITZ WAS GOING
TO PICK UP HIS GIRL FRIEND...SHE LIVES
ON SHRIVER STREET.

SHRIVER STREET...
THAT SO PLAIN A NAME
SHOULD CONTAIN SUCH MAGIC
FOR ME! MY HEART JUMPS
AT THE MERE MENTION OF
SHRIVER STREET!

OH.

WELL, HERE'S SHRIVER STREET ALREADY!

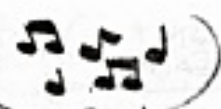
IT SURE DOESN'T
MAKE MY HEART JUMP!
THE AIR IN THIS
STREET ISN'T EXACTLY
HEALTHFUL!

AH! BUT MAE...SHE IS A GODDESS IN THE
MIDST OF INIQUITY...SOMEDAY I SHALL
TAKE HER AWAY FROM ALL THIS...FREE
HER OF THE EVIL OF SHRIVER STREET! WE'LL
FLY AWAY TOGETHER, SPEND OUR DREAMY LIVES
IN SOME LITTLE HIDE AWAY IN THE FAR-REACHES
OF THE EARTH!

I JUST HOPE SHE CAN HOLD OUT
AT THE CANNING FACTORY FOR A FEW
MORE WEEKS SO WE'LL HAVE ENOUGH
MONEY TO START A NEW LIFE!

WELL, SHE LIVES IN THIS BUILDING. WAIT
HERE, WE'LL BE RIGHT DOWN.

GRAF



KNOCK
KNOCK



CONTINUED

ANIMAL TOWN COMICS — CONTINUED

WELL WELL! WHAT A LOVELY DAY
IT IS FOR PROMENADING THE BOARDWALK,
EY, MY SWEET? WE MUST DO THIS MORE
OFTEN!
JUST WHAT I WAS GOING TO
SUGGEST, FRITZ!



AH! A KICKSTER OF THAT DELIGHTFUL
INVENTION... COTTON CANDY! WOULD YOU CARE
FOR SOME, MY DEAR?
WELL, ALRIGHT!



TWO COTTON CANDIES! GIMME A COTTON CANDY,
MILLYA?



THAT'S TEN CENTS, SUH!



ONE FOR YOU AND ONE FOR ME!



Y' LITTLE WISE GUY!



IT WAS AN ACCIDENT, YOU CRUDE PIG!



SO YOU'RE LOOKIN' FOR A FIGHT TOO LADY... C'MON... I'LL FIGHT!



PICKING ON A LADY! THAT'S THE ONE THING THAT AROUSES IN ME AN OVERPOWERING INFURIATION!



WAIT'LL I GET MY HANDS ON...



PERMIT ME TO BORROW THESE BALLOONS TEMPORARILY, SIR!



STOP THAT GUY!

COME BACK WITH MY BALLOONS!





IT'D BE JUST YOUR LUCK FOR A ROLLER COASTER TO COME ALONG ABOUT NOW!



AS A MATTER OF FACT, I SPY ONE OF THOSE VEHICLES ASCENDING RAPIDLY UP THE TRACK AT THIS VERY MOMENT...



CLACKETY
CLACK
CLACKETY
CLACK
CLACK

YAAH!

OH! NOW THAT WAS AN
ILL-JUDGED ACTION, SPURRED
BY A MOMENT OF PANIC, AND
WHICH CAN ONLY RESULT IN
A GREAT TRAGEDY!

MY HEARTFELT SYMPATHIES GO WITH YOU
TO THE GROUND, DEAR SIR, AND MY SINCERE
REGRETS THAT THIS FOOLISH, ATROCIOUS INCI-
DENT OCCURED AT ALL...



AMMA, THESE RIDICULOUS
BALLOONS ARE WAFTING ME
TOWARDS THE FERRIS-WHEEL...
PERHAPS I CAN GRAB HOLD OF IT.

WHY, BLESS ME! WHAT
GOOD FORTUNE IS THIS! MAE,
MY DEAR... TAKE MY HAND...

NO NEED TO WORRY, MY LOVELY,
I AM ONCE AGAIN DELIVERED TO
THE SECURITY OF YOUR FEMININE
ARMS!

FRITZ! I WAS WORRIED
ABOUT YOU!

THE PLEASURE IS MINE!



10 JUNE 1961



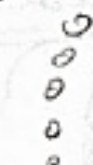
11 JUNE 1961

A SAD COMIC STRIP



ST. PATRICK'S DAY 1962
R. CRUMB

SHOULD I LAY HERE OR
SHOULD I GET UP?



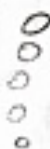
MY LIFE IS WITHOUT MEANING...
ALL IS CHAOS AND CONFUSION...
I MIGHT AS WELL LAY HERE TILL
I ROT...



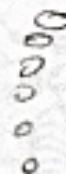
I AM
COMPLETELY CONFUSED... I
UTTERLY DON'T KNOW WHAT
TO DO...



THERE SURELY ISN'T ANY SENSE
IN GETTING UP, SINCE I HAVE NO PURPOSE,
NO GOAL, NO REASON FOR DOING
ANYTHING...



WHAT'S THE USE IN GETTING UP
AND TRYING TO DO ANYTHING? IT'S
ALL SO FUTILE... WHY STRUGGLE? WHY
FIGHT FOR SURVIVAL? IT'S ALL FOR
NOTHING...



...MAYBE IT WOULDN'T BE FOR NOTHING
IF THERE WAS SOMETHING TO BELIEVE
IN... SOMETHING OF JOY AND LOVE...



... BUT THERE ISN'T... NOT FOR
ME, ANYWAY... FOR ME THERE IS NO-
THING... I'VE TRIED IN VAIN, STRUGGLED
AND STRIVED FOR YEARS AND YEARS
TO GET LOVE, AND PEACE, AND UNDER-
STANDING...



ALL I EVER GOT FOR ALL THE EFFORT
WAS FRUSTRATION, HEART-ACHE,
DESPAIR, CONFUSION... ALL MY DREAMS
HAVE BEEN SHATTERED... LIFE HAS LET
ME DOWN...



...SO WHY GO ON? WHY GO ON
FEELING FRUSTRATED AND LONELY
AND DEPRESSED... I MUST COME TO
ACCEPT MY LOT...



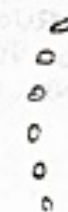
I MUST ACCEPT DEFEAT... I MUST
GIVE MYSELF UP TO EMPTINESS, BLANK-
NESS... A LIFE WITHOUT CARING, WITH-
OUT STRIVING... A LIFE WITHOUT LIFE...
... A STATE OF VEGETATION...



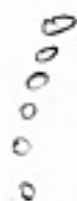
...SO I'LL LAY HERE TILL MY
HEART STOPS BEATING AND LIFE
GOES OUT OF ME... TILL DEATH AND
OBLIVION OVERTAKE ME...



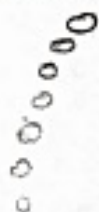
OBLIVION!...



COMPLETE EXTINCTION...
THE END OF EXISTENCE... THE
END OF LIFE!



THIS SHORT SPAN OF LIFE
THAT I HAVE... SHALL COME TO AN
UTTER STOP... IT SHALL BE NO MORE!



GOOD GRIEF... IT'S... IT'S
APPALLING... FRIGHTENING! I... I
SUDDENLY FEEL A NEED TO DO
SOMETHING! TO USE THAT SHORT
SPAN OF LIFE... TO GET SOMETHING
OUT OF IT...



...I MUST LIVE... I MUST
USE ALL MY SENSES TO THE
FULLEST WHILE THERE'S STILL
TIME... WHY AM I LAYING HERE
WASTING PRECIOUS MINUTES...



I'VE GOT TO FEEL THIS
LIFE THAT IS IN ME... I'VE GOT TO
USE IT TO BEST ADVANTAGE WHILE
I HAVE IT! ...GOT TO LIVE! LIVE!



OH! LIFE! I HAVE IT... IT'S MINE... OH! THE SUN! LOOK AT IT... THE BEAUTIFUL, WARM, LIFE-GIVING SUN!



OH! LOOK! LOOK! THE GRASS! HOW GREEN, AND MOIST AND SOFT! THE TREES! LOOK AT THE TREES! HOW NOBLE AND GRAND!



OH! WONDERFUL JOY... BEAUTIFUL EMOTION... LIFE! IT IS TO BE LOVED! OH! THE CLOUDS... THEY'RE WONDEROUS!



FLOWERS! OH JOY! MY EYES ARE FILLED WITH THEIR WONDERFUL, HAPPY COLORS!



AHH... THE AIR! IT IS SO SWEET AND COOL! OH, THIS BODY IS A WONDEROUS THING! WHAT IT CAN DO... HOW GREAT IT IS! HOW FULL OF LIFE!



OH! WONDER OF WONDERS! A CHILD... A DEAR, SWEET INNOCENT LITTLE ONE...



HOW FREE AND HAPPY IT IS!
HOW NEW IS IT'S LIFE! AH,...
A SIGHT TO BEHOLD!



OH LIFE! HOW FULL OF
MIRACLES! HOW FULL OF THINGS
TO SEE AND FEEL! HOW EXCIT-
ING IT ALL IS...



OH! WHAT NEXT? AH! A
YOUNG GIRL!... OH JOY OF MY HEART..
A FRESH, BEAUTIFUL YOUNG GIRL!
OH! I LOVE HER TILL I COULD
BURST!



OH! YOUNG GIRL! YOU ARE
HERE TO LOVE! TO KISS!



CRACK!



...SIGH...COMPLETELY CONFUSED...
FOREVER LOST YES... I WILL LAY
HERE TILL OBLIVION COMES AND
TAKES ME..



THE END

—continued from front flap

But none of the others had the commitment, or obsession, of Charles and Robert, and their "Animal Town Comics Club" soon lapsed.

As the end of his high-school days approached, the thought of finding his own place in the world puzzled and frightened Robert. "I'm not quite sure about my own future; I'm even a little baffled. There are so many indefinite things. . . Like the future of the cartoon industry, what the public will like, what I can do best myself. . . All this makes the future seem rather hazy. . . Which is best? Comic strips? Magazines? Not comic books, unless there's a great reawakening! . . . Possibly the animation field. . . H m m m . . . Y i k . . ."

He even began doubting the medium of comics itself: ". . . Yes, I'm trying to put into my work the everyday human realities. . . It's an extremely difficult thing to do in the comic strip medium. . . There are so many delicate little things that, when I try to express them in comic strip form, come out awkward. . . A lot of things, it seems, can only be gotten across when you write them down, explain them with words. . . Charles and I have had a few debates as to whether you can express reality to its fullest in the comic strip. . . He says it can't be done. I say I'm going to try it. . . So far, I haven't really gotten at stark reality, the bottom of life (as I see it) in my work. . . I might end up giving it up and going over to writing alone, if it doesn't seem to be doing any good to try to do it in comic strips. But then, who knows, I might succeed?!"

*—from the introduction
by Marty Pahl*



R. Crumb, 1959

The Complete Crumb Comics: The Early Years of Bitter Struggle is the first in a multi-volume series comprising the complete works of the legendary cartoonist *R. Crumb*, one of America's most original, trenchant, and uncompromising satirists. The series will include his earliest, heretofore unpublished comic strips, as well as his sketchbooks, underground comix, dramatic and autobiographical strips, and his classic cartoon creations Fritz the Cat and Mr. Natural.



"...I'm trying to put into my work the everyday human realities. It's an extremely difficult thing to do in the comic strip medium. There are so many delicate little things that, when I try to express them in comic strip form, come out awkward. . . . [My brother] Charles and I have had a few debates as to whether you can express reality to its fullest in the comic strip. He says it can't be done. I say I'm going to try. . . . So far, I haven't really gotten at stark reality, the bottom of life (as I see it) in my work. . . . I might end up giving it up and going over to writing alone, if it doesn't seem to be doing any good to try to do it in comic strips. But then, who knows, I might succeed!!"

ROBERT CRUMB
from a letter to Marty Pahlis
November 5, 1961

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